

# **I. The Downing Street Minutes and Deception, Manipulation, Torture, Retribution and Coverups in the Iraq War**

## **A. Chronology: Last Throes of Credibility**

*"But I think the level of activity that we see today, from a military standpoint, I think will clearly decline. I think they're in the last throes, if you will, of the insurgency."*

-----May 30, 2005, Vice President Dick Cheney's Remarks on the Iraqi insurgency, Larry King Live<sup>1</sup>

The 2000 Presidential election focused on many issues relating to domestic and foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> However, the topic of Iraq was virtually unmentioned in the campaign. In a presidential debate with then-Vice President Al Gore, then-presidential candidate George W. Bush emphasized that he would be careful about using troops for "nation building" purposes and that he would not launch a pre-emptive war because he believed the role of the military was to "prevent war from happening in the first place."<sup>3</sup> At the same time, some future members of the Bush Administration, dubbed the neoconservatives, were waiting for war with Iraq. High-ranking officials such as Dick Cheney, Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz were part of this group.<sup>4</sup>

In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the Bush Administration began to hint at the coming attack on Iraq. In his January 29, 2002 State of the Union Address, the President remarked that countries like Iraq, Iran and North Korea "constitute an axis of evil. . . . These regimes pose a grave and growing danger. . . . I will not wait on events, while dangers gather."<sup>5</sup> On June 1, 2002, during a speech at West Point, President Bush formally enunciated his doctrine of preemption that would be used against Iraq.<sup>6</sup> It was also around this time that Vice President Cheney and his Chief of Staff, Scooter Libby, began making a series of unusual trips to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to discuss Iraq intelligence.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time, the President's public statements indicated a reluctance to use military force in Iraq. He assured the public that he had not made up his mind to go to war with Iraq and that war was a last resort.<sup>8</sup> However, contrary to these public statements, the Bush Administration formed the White House Iraq Group (WHIG) in August 2002 in an apparent effort to bolster public support for war with Iraq.<sup>9</sup>

Shortly thereafter, the Administration began making more alarming and sensational claims about the danger posed to the United States by Iraq including in a

September 12, 2002 address to the United Nations, and began to press forward publicly with preparations for war.<sup>10</sup> In the days following the President's speech to the United Nations, Iraq delivered a letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stating that it would allow the return of UN weapons inspectors "without conditions."<sup>11</sup> But on September 18, President Bush discredited Hussein's offer to let UN inspectors back into Iraq as "his latest ploy."<sup>12</sup>

As the Congressional vote to authorize force against Iraq approached, the President and Administration officials raised the specter of a nuclear attack by Iraq.<sup>13</sup> The President subsequently received from Congress on October 11, 2002, a joint resolution for the use of force in Iraq.<sup>14</sup> Based on the intelligence findings in the National Intelligence Estimate provided to Congress by the Administration, the resolution stated that Iraq posed a "continuing threat" to the United States by, among other things, "actively seeking a nuclear weapons capability."<sup>15</sup>

The President's focus then moved on to the United Nations in an effort to persuade the UN to approve renewed weapons inspections in Iraq and sanctions for noncompliance. Once again, the President asserted his reluctance to take military action. Upon signing the resolution, the President stated: "I have not ordered the use of force. I hope the use of force will not become necessary."<sup>16</sup> On November 8, 2002, the United Nations Security Council adopted UN Resolution 1441, which stipulated that Iraq was required to readmit UN weapons inspectors under more stringent terms than required by previous UN Resolutions.<sup>17</sup>

On January 27, 2003, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) indicated that the Bush Administration's claim that aluminum tubes being delivered to Iraq were part of an Iraqi nuclear weapons program likely was false.<sup>18</sup> In the wake of this claim being discredited, President Bush introduced a new piece of evidence to the public in his State of the Union address on January 28, 2003, to demonstrate that Iraq was developing a nuclear arms program: "The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa."<sup>19</sup>

On February 5, 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell took the Bush Administration's case to the United Nations Security Council. In a presentation to the United Nations, Secretary Powell charged, among other things, that Iraq had "mobile production facilities" for biological weapons.<sup>20</sup> With its case to the United Nations delivered, for the first time and contrary to earlier claims that the Administration was reluctant to use force, the Administration publicly indicated its readiness and enthusiasm for going to war. The question was no longer whether force would be used, but what - if any - difficulties would accompany the use of force. Vice President Dick Cheney made an appearance on *Meet the Press* and stated that the war was not going to be long, costly or bloody because "we will, in fact, be greeted as liberators."<sup>21</sup>

On March 18, 2003, the President submitted a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate informing the

Congress of his determination that diplomatic and peaceful means alone would not protect the Nation or lead to Iraqi compliance with United Nations demands.<sup>22</sup> On March 20, the President launched the preemptive invasion.

A little more than a month into the invasion, President Bush landed aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln and, standing beneath a massive banner reading "Mission Accomplished," he stated, "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended."<sup>23</sup> Immediately thereafter, it was self-evident that - despite the premature declaration of victory - numerous problems persisted with regard to the occupation. This was not the only post-war mischaracterization of the truth by the Bush Administration. Since then, they have been dogged by misstatements concerning the size and strength of the insurgency; the preparedness of Iraqi troops; the cost of the war; the existence of weapons of mass destruction (WMD); and the war's impact on terrorism, among other things.<sup>24</sup>

Another significant problem for the Bush Administration was its failure to find any of the WMD that it had used to justify the invasion. On July 6, 2003, Ambassador Joseph Wilson, who was sent to Niger at the behest of the CIA to investigate the uranium claim, wrote in an op-ed piece that the intelligence concerning Niger's alleged sale of uranium to Iraq was "twisted to exaggerate the Iraqi threat."<sup>25</sup> The following day, the White House issued a rare retraction of the uranium allegations from the President's State of the Union Address.<sup>26</sup> Shortly thereafter, the identity of Wilson's wife, a covert CIA agent, was revealed in the press through a Robert Novak column sourced to two officials in the Administration.<sup>27</sup> Later in the year, Colin Powell also conceded that the information given in his February 5, 2003 speech before the UN "appear[ed] not to be . . . that solid."<sup>28</sup> Capping these retractions were the findings of David Kay, the U.S. official responsible for the WMD search as the head of Iraq Survey Group, who concluded that "there were not large stockpiles of newly produced weapons of mass destruction. We don't find the people, the documents or the physical plants that you would expect to find if the production was going on."<sup>29</sup>

Amid these admissions that the case for war was, generously speaking, faulty, the Administration and Congressional Republicans sought to pre-empt inquiries into the White House use or manipulation of intelligence by launching more limited investigations. On February 6, 2004, President Bush created the Robb-Silberman Commission, which later found that the intelligence community was "dead wrong in almost all of its pre-war judgments about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction."<sup>30</sup> However, this Commission was specifically prohibited from examining the use or manipulation of intelligence by policymakers.<sup>31</sup>

On March 16, 2004, the Democratic staff of the U.S. House Committee on Government Reform submitted a report to Ranking Member Henry A. Waxman.<sup>32</sup> This report, entitled "Iraq on the Record: the Bush Administration's Public Statements on Iraq," details public statements made by senior Bush Administration officials regarding policy toward Iraq. The report indicates that "five officials made misleading statements about the threat posed by Iraq in 125 public appearances. The report and

an accompanying database identify 237 specific misleading statements by the five officials.”<sup>33</sup>

On July 7, 2004, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence reported that it had found numerous failures in the intelligence-gathering and analysis process.<sup>34</sup> However, that review also was explicitly not intended to look into the Administration's use of that wrong intelligence in selling the war.<sup>35</sup> To date, there has never been a truly independent, comprehensive non-partisan or bipartisan review of the Administration's false claims regarding WMD or any other aspect of the war.<sup>36</sup>

On April 28, 2004, *60 Minutes II* made public a series of photos taken at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq documenting apparent torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment by U.S. military and other personnel.<sup>37</sup> Since then, reports of other alleged violations of international law involving Iraqi prisoners have been reported by the media and human rights organizations.<sup>38</sup>

As the war continued into 2005, with U.S. casualties approaching 1,500, Iraq held elections on January 30. The Administration heralded the elections as a symbol of freedom and as an event which validated the initial invasion. By that point, however, the reason for attacking Iraq had shifted from an imminent threat of weapons of mass destruction; to combating terrorism after the September 11, attacks; to regime change; and eventually to promoting democracy, and to ensure that those lives lost were not lost in vain.<sup>39</sup>

While evidence and accounts of Administration insiders strongly suggested a predetermination to go to war and a manipulation of intelligence to justify it, that evidence and those accounts were attacked by Administration officials as inaccurate or biased. Then, on May 1, 2005, the *Sunday London Times* published the first of a series of important documents known as the “Downing Street Minutes.”<sup>40</sup> The Downing Street Minutes (DSM) are a collection of classified documents, written by senior British officials during the spring and summer of 2002, which recounted meetings and discussions of such officials with their American counterparts. The focus of these meetings and discussions was the U.S. plan to invade Iraq. The DSM appear to document a pre-determination to go war with Iraq on the part of U.S. officials, and a manipulation of intelligence by such officials in order to justify the war.

The DSM generated significant media coverage in Great Britain in the lead up to the British elections, but initially received very little media attention in the United States. However, a concerted effort to call attention to them by Congressman John Conyers, Jr., and a number of Members of Congress, grassroots groups, and Internet activists was ultimately successful. On May 5, 2005, Congressman Conyers, the Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee, along with 87 other Members of Congress (eventually 121), wrote to the President demanding answers to the allegations presented in the Minutes.<sup>41</sup> In his letter, Representative Conyers questioned the President on whether there “was there a coordinated effort with the



U.S. intelligence community and/or British officials to 'fix' the intelligence and facts around the policy."<sup>42</sup>

On June 16, 2005, Congressman Conyers and 32 Members of Congress convened an historic hearing on the Downing Street Minutes, covered by numerous press outlets. The hearing was forced to a cramped room in the basement of the Capitol since Democrats were denied ordinary hearing room space by the Republican leadership. The Republicans tried to disrupt the hearings further by holding 12 consecutive floor votes during the hearing, an unprecedented number.<sup>43</sup> After the hearing, Congressman Conyers led a congressional delegation to the White House to personally deliver a letter signed by over 500,000 citizens, demanding answers from the President.<sup>44</sup> To date, the White House has declined to respond to these questions that were posed by these citizens and their elected representatives in Congress.

In the meantime, after some initial false starts, delays, and denials concerning possible misconduct in the Bush Administration's "outing" of Valerie Plame Wilson,<sup>45</sup> then-Attorney General John Ashcroft recused himself from the investigation due to conflicts of interest and, on December 30, 2003, U.S. Attorney Patrick J. Fitzgerald was appointed to conduct the investigation of the Plame leak.<sup>46</sup> By July 2005, it became apparent that Karl Rove, a senior aide to the President, was involved in the leak; a *Time* reporter's notes revealed that he had spoken to Karl Rove about the case.<sup>47</sup> Then, on July 18, 2005, President Bush conspicuously changed the standard for White House ethics from stating that he would fire anyone who leaked the information to firing someone only if he or she "committed a crime."<sup>48</sup> With a lack of response from the Administration or from congressional Republicans, on July 22, 2005, Congressman Henry Waxman and Senator Byron Dorgan conducted a joint Democratic hearing on the "National Security Consequences of Disclosing the Identity of a Covert Intelligence Officer."<sup>49</sup>

Ambassador Wilson was not the only individual facing apparent retribution from the Bush Administration for criticizing its conduct. For example, on August 27, 2005, Bunnatine Greenhouse, the Chief Contracting officer at the Army Corps of Engineers, was demoted in apparent retaliation for exposing Pentagon favoritism toward a Halliburton subsidiary in awarding no-bid contracts in Iraq.<sup>50</sup> As discussed later in this Report, a long line of individuals were subject to other forms of sanctions and retribution by the Administration for exposing Administration wrongdoing concerning Iraq.

On October 28, 2005, Vice Presidential Chief of Staff Scooter Libby resigned after a federal grand jury indicted him on five charges, totaling a maximum 30-year sentence, related to the leak probe.<sup>51</sup> Patrick Fitzgerald has yet to indict other individuals but has publicly stated that his investigation would remain open to consider other matters.<sup>52</sup> On November 1, 2005, after numerous attempts to open an investigation on the issue, Democrats demanded answers to the Administration's use of pre-war intelligence and led the Senate into a rare closed-door session, finally receiving a promise from the Republican majority to speed up the process.<sup>53</sup>

Since that time, numerous additional disclosures have come out calling into question the Bush Administration's pre-war veracity concerning WMD intelligence. On November 6, Senator Levin disclosed a classified Defense Department document showing that an al Qaeda prisoner, Iba al Shaykh al-Libi had been identified as a fabricator months before the Bush Administration used his claims to allege that Iraq had trained al Qaeda members to use biological and chemical weapons.<sup>54</sup> On November 20, the *Los Angeles Times* revealed that German intelligence officials had informed the Administration that the Iraqi defector known as "Curveball" was not a reliable source for their mobile biological weapons charges.<sup>55</sup>

Today, more than half of all Americans believe the Administration "deliberately misled" the public on the reasons for going to war.<sup>56</sup> The invasion appears to have increased and emboldened the terrorist movement.<sup>57</sup> As of the date of this Report, United States casualties are in excess of 2,500 and the Iraq war costs approximately \$6 billion a month and by some estimates the eventual cost could approach a trillion dollars.<sup>58</sup>

## **B. Detailed Findings**

### **1. Determination to go to War before Congressional Authorization**

There are numerous, documented facts now in the public record that indicate the Bush Administration had made a decision to go to war before it sought Congressional authorization or informed the American people of that decision.

Our investigation shows that while the roots of this decision existed even before George W. Bush was first elected president, it became a foregone conclusion in the aftermath of the September 11 tragedy. Due to the release of the so-called "Downing Street Minutes" materials, we are now able to confirm that there were agreements between the Bush and Blair governments in the spring and summer of 2002 to go to war in Iraq. Further evidence of that agreement to go to war exists by virtue of the Bush Administration's marketing campaign to sell the war to the American people commencing in the fall of 2002, and the efforts to use the United Nations as a pretext to go to war later in 2002 and early in 2003.

Even though the Administration had begun planning an invasion of Iraq, the President and senior Administration officials continued to issue public denials regarding this effort, including misleading statements made before Congress:

- September 8, 2002: Vice President Dick Cheney insists that "first of all, no decision's been made yet to launch a military operation."<sup>59</sup>

- September 16, 2002: US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld states "The President hasn't made a decision with respect to Iraq. Didn't I say that earlier? I thought I said that."<sup>60</sup>
- September 19, 2002: Secretary of State Colin Powell states, "Of course, the President has not decided on a military option . . . nobody wants war as a first resort . . . [n]obody is looking for a war if it can be avoided."<sup>61</sup>
- October 1, 2002: The President made the first in a series of statements, "Of course, I haven't made up my mind we're going to war with Iraq."<sup>62</sup>
- November 7, 2002: "Hopefully, we can do this peacefully — don't get me wrong. And if the world were to collectively come together to do so, and to put pressure on Saddam Hussein and convince him to disarm, there's a chance he may decide to do that. And war is not my first choice, don't — it's my last choice."<sup>63</sup>
- December 4, 2002: "This is our attempt to work with the world community to create peace. And the best way for peace is for Mr. Saddam Hussein to disarm. It's up to him to make his decision."<sup>64</sup>
- December 31, 2002: "You said we're headed to war in Iraq — I don't know why you say that. I hope we're not headed to war in Iraq. I'm the person who gets to decide, not you."<sup>65</sup>
- January 2, 2003: "First of all, you know, I'm hopeful we won't have to go war, and let's leave it at that."<sup>66</sup>
- March 6, 2003: "I've not made up our mind about military action."<sup>67</sup>
- March 8, 2003: "We are doing everything we can to avoid war in Iraq. But if Saddam Hussein does not disarm peacefully, he will be disarmed by force."<sup>68</sup>
- March 17, 2003: "Should Saddam Hussein choose confrontation, the American people can know that every measure has been taken to avoid war, and every measure will be taken to win it."<sup>69</sup>

a. **Avenging the Father and Working with the Neo-Cons**

*'From the very beginning, there was a conviction that Saddam Hussein was a bad person and that he needed to go. It was all about finding a way to do it. That was the tone of it. The president saying, 'Go find me a way to do this.'*

-----January 11, 2004, Paul O'Neill, "60 Minutes"<sup>70</sup>

Our investigation has found, in retrospect, there were indications even before September 11, 2001 that President Bush and key members of his Administration were fixated on the military invasion of Iraq, regardless of the provocation. A key piece of the puzzle was revealed in a series of interviews between then-Governor Bush and writer and long-time family friend Mickey Herskowitz when, according to Herskowitz, Mr. Bush stated:

“One of the keys to being seen as a great leader is to be seen as a commander-in-chief. . . . My father had all this political capital built up when he drove the Iraqis out of Kuwait and he wasted it. . . . **If I have a chance to invade . . . if I had that much capital, I'm not going to waste it.**”<sup>71</sup>

According to Mr. Herskowitz, George W. Bush's beliefs on Iraq were based in part on a notion ascribed to now-Vice President Dick Cheney: “Start a small war. Pick a country where there is justification you can jump on, go ahead and invade.”<sup>72</sup>

In addition to Mr. Bush's apparent belief that a successful military invasion could cause him to be seen as a great leader, additional possible motivations include responding to those right-wing critics who blamed his father for not entering Baghdad during the first Gulf War,<sup>73</sup> and achieving revenge for Saddam Hussein's reported plot to assassinate his father. Discussing Saddam Hussein, on September 26, 2002, Bush declared: “**After all, this is the guy that tried to kill my dad at one time.**”<sup>74</sup>

It is also significant that key members of the Bush Administration were part of a group of so-called “neo-conservatives” or “neo-cons” who were dedicated to removing Saddam Hussein by military force. The notion of toppling Saddam Hussein and his regime dates as far back as the 1990s, when it had been a priority of a circle of neo-conservative intellectuals, led by Richard Perle, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense under President Reagan, and Paul Wolfowitz, an Undersecretary of Defense for Policy under President George H.W. Bush.<sup>75</sup> The neocons did not have the power to effectuate their goals during the Clinton Administration, but they remained tied to one another and to Dick Cheney through a number of right-wing think tanks and institutes, including the Project for the New American Century.

On January 26, 1998, the Project for the New American Century issued a letter to President Bill Clinton explicitly calling for “the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power.”<sup>76</sup> Foretelling of subsequent events, the letter calls for the United States to go to war alone and attack the United Nations, and instructs that the United States should not be “crippled by a misguided insistence on unanimity in the UN Security Council.”<sup>77</sup> **The letter was signed by 18 individuals; ten of them, including Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz, became members of the current Bush Administration.** Other documentary evidence of the neocon vision for an invasion is manifested by the December 1, 1997 issue of the *Weekly Standard*, a conservative magazine, which was headlined by a bold directive: “Saddam Must Go: A How-to Guide.” Two of the articles were written by current Administration officials, including Paul Wolfowitz.<sup>78</sup>

In September 2000, a strategy document commissioned from the Project for the New American Century by Dick Cheney, argued that “[t]he United States has for decades sought to play a more permanent role in Gulf regional security. While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein.”<sup>79</sup>

There is other evidence from within the highest levels of Bush’s cabinet of an early fixation on invading Iraq. On *60 Minutes*, former Bush Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill reported that as early as January 30, 2001, members of the Bush Administration were discussing plans for Saddam Hussein’s removal from power: “From the very beginning, there was a conviction that Saddam Hussein was a bad person and that he needed to go. It was all about finding a way to do it. That was the tone of it. The president saying, ‘Go find me a way to do this.’”<sup>80</sup>

This fixation on war with Iraq would seem to explain why, from the very beginning of the Bush Administration, key officials were consulting with outsiders on possible replacements for Saddam Hussein and contemplating possible means of exploiting Iraqi oil fields. For example, in February 2001, White House officials discussed a memo titled “Plan for post-Saddam Iraq,” which talks about troop requirements, establishing war crimes tribunals, and divvying up Iraq’s oil wealth.<sup>81</sup> During this time, Iraqi-born oil industry consultant Falah Aljibury was asked to interview would-be replacements for a new US-installed dictator. As Mr. Aljibury stated, “It is an invasion, but it will act like a coup. The original plan was to liberate Iraq from the Saddamists and from the regime, to stabilize the country.”<sup>82</sup> In March of 2001, a Pentagon document titled, “Foreign Suitors For Iraqi Oilfield Contracts” was circulated.<sup>83</sup> The document outlines areas of oil exploration and includes a table listing 30 countries that have interests in Iraq’s oil industry. The memorandum also includes the names of companies that have interests and the oil fields with which those interests are associated.<sup>84</sup>

**b. September 11 and its Aftermath: Beating the Drums for War**

*“F\*\*\* Saddam. We’re taking him out.”*

-----March, 2002, President George W. Bush, poking his head into the office of National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice.<sup>85</sup>

It was the September 11 tragedy that gave the President and members of his Administration the political opportunity to invade Iraq without provocation. It was also in the immediate aftermath of September 11 that it became clear that the President had made up his mind to invade. We know this now for several reasons – we have first-hand evidence concerning President Bush’s intentions; we have direct evidence concerning the intent of other senior members of his Administration; we have information provided through high-level Administration sources; and we have



documentary and other evidence concerning specific actions taken by the United States military that brought our nation on the verge of war with Iraq before Congressional authorization was sought.

Donald Rumsfeld began pushing for retaliatory attacks against Iraq almost immediately after the September 11 attacks. *CBS News* reported that at 2:40 p.m. on September 11, Secretary Rumsfeld stated: “[I want the] best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H. [Saddam Hussein] at same time. Not only UBL [Osama bin Laden].”<sup>86</sup> Rumsfeld went on to say, “[g]o massive. Sweep it all up. Things related and not.”<sup>87</sup> Spencer Ackerman and John Judis of *The New Republic* reported that, “Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz floated the idea that Iraq, with more than 20 years of inclusion on the State Department’s terror-sponsor list, be held immediately accountable.”<sup>88</sup>

The very first evidence regarding President Bush’s inclination to invade Iraq after the September 11 attacks occurred the very next day when he instructed National Security official Richard A. Clarke to go out of his way to find a link between Saddam Hussein and the terrorist attacks. Richard Clarke recounts the following in his book, “Against All Enemies:”

[On September 12<sup>th</sup>] I left the Video Conferencing Center and there, wandering alone around the situation room, was the president. He looked like he wanted something to do. He grabbed a few of us and closed the door to the conference room. ‘Look,’ he told us, ‘I know you have a lot to do and all . . . but I want you, as soon as you can, to go back over everything, everything. See if Saddam did this. See if he’s linked in any way.’ I was once again taken aback, incredulous, and it showed. ‘But, Mr. President, al Qaeda did this.’ ‘I know, I know, but . . . see if Saddam was involved. Just look. I want to know any shred’. . . . ‘Look into Iraq, Saddam,’ the President said testily and left us. Lisa Gordon-Hagerty stared after him with her mouth hanging open.<sup>89</sup>

This inclination was evidenced to other senior Republicans as well. For example, Trent Lott observed in an interview on *Meet the Press* that shortly after September 11, the President made clear his intention to go after Iraq:

Well, beginning in August that year and into the fall--in fact, beginning not too long after 9/11--as we had leadership meetings at breakfast with the president, he would go around the world and talk about what was going on, where the threats were, where the dangers were, and even in private discussions, it was clear to me that he thought Iraq was a destabilizing force, was a danger and a growing danger, and that we were going to have to deal with that problem.<sup>90</sup>

We have also received confirmation of the Bush Administration’s intention to invade Iraq after the September 11 attacks from various high-level Administration sources. For example, General Wesley Clark revealed on *Meet the Press* that shortly

after the September 11 attacks, the White House was asking people to link Saddam Hussein with the September 11 attacks. Clark stated:

[T]here was a concerted effort during the fall of 2001, starting immediately after 9/11 to pin 9/11 and the terrorism problem on Saddam Hussein. . . . Well, it came from the White House . . . it came from all over. I got a call on 9/11. I was on CNN, and I got a call at my home saying, 'You got to say this is connected. This is state-sponsored terrorism. This has to be connected to Saddam Hussein' I said, 'But-I'm willing to say it but what's your evidence?' And I never got any evidence.<sup>91</sup>

On September 17, 2001, President Bush signed a 2½-page document marked "TOP SECRET" that outlined the plan for going to war in Afghanistan as part of a global campaign against terrorism. As one senior Administration official commented, the direction to the Pentagon to begin planning military options for an invasion of Iraq appeared "almost as a footnote."<sup>92</sup>

"On September 19 and 20, an advisory group known as the Defense Policy Board met at the Pentagon - with Secretary Rumsfeld in attendance - and discussed the importance of ousting Hussein."<sup>93</sup> According to Administration sources:

They met in Rumsfeld's conference room. After a C.I.A. briefing on the 9/11 attacks, Perle introduced two guest speakers. The first was Bernard Lewis, professor emeritus at Princeton, a longtime associate of Cheney's and Wolfowitz's. Lewis told the meeting that America must respond to 9/11 with a show of strength: to do otherwise would be taken in the Islamic world as a sign of weakness-one it would be bound to exploit. At the same time, he said, America should support democratic reformers in the Middle East. "Such as," he said, turning to the second of Perle's guest speakers, "my friend here, Dr. Chalabi" . . . . At the meeting Chalabi said that, although there was as yet no evidence linking Iraq to 9/11, failed states such as Saddam's were a breeding ground for terrorists, and Iraq, he told those at the meeting, possessed W.M.D. During the later part of the second day, Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld listened carefully to the debate. "Rumsfeld was getting confirmation of his own instincts . . ." Perle says. "He seemed neither surprised nor discomfited by the idea of taking action against Iraq."<sup>94</sup>

The 9-11 Commission Report further notes that as early as September 20, 2001, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas Feith, suggested attacking Iraq in response to the September 11 attacks. In a draft memo, Feith "expressed disappointment at the limited options immediately available in Afghanistan and the lack of ground options. [He] suggested instead hitting terrorists outside the Middle East in the initial offensive, perhaps deliberately selecting a non-al Qaeda target like Iraq."<sup>95</sup> Also, on September 20, it is reported that President Bush told Prime Minister Blair of the need to respond militarily with Iraq. Blair told Bush he should not get distracted from the war on terror. As noted above, Bush replied, "I agree with

you Tony. We must deal with this first. But when we have dealt with Afghanistan, we must come back to Iraq.”<sup>96</sup>

By late November 2001, the President essentially instructed Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to develop an Iraq war plan, which Rumsfeld began to implement. In a CBS News *60 Minutes* interview about his book, “Plan of Attack,” Bob Woodward describes their meeting:

President Bush, after a National Security Council meeting, takes Don Rumsfeld aside, collars him physically, and takes him into a little cubbyhole room and closes the door and says, “What have you got in terms of plans for Iraq? What is the status of the war plan? I want you to get on it. I want you to keep it secret.”<sup>97</sup>

The evidence of the President’s determination to go to war continues on through 2002. On January 29, 2002, President Bush gave his State of the Union address in which he stated that Iraq was part of an “axis of evil” along with South Korea and Iran.<sup>98</sup> Although Administration officials sought to temper the meaning of that reference, the President’s own speech writers have subsequently made it clear that the President was intending to target Iraq. As James Mann recounts: “David Frum, then one of Bush’s speech writers, later claimed that the original aim of the axis-of-evil speech was specifically to target Iraq. Mark Gerson, Bush’s chief speech writer had asked Frum first to find a justification for war against Iraq, he wrote; later Iran was added, and finally North Korea as a seemingly casual afterthought. Frum’s perspective reflected both his inexperience as a speech writer and also the thinking of neoconservatives within the administration, who were eager for a regime change in Iraq.”<sup>99</sup>

We have also learned from three sources that beginning as early as February 2002, the Bush Administration took specific concrete steps to deploy military troops and assets into Iraq. First, in February 2002, Senator Bob Graham told the Council on Foreign Relations that a military commander had said to him: “Senator, we have stopped fighting the war on terror in Afghanistan. We are moving military and intelligence personnel and resources out of Afghanistan to get ready for a future war in Iraq.”<sup>100</sup>

Second, it is clear from Bob Woodward’s book, “Plan of Attack” that the redeployment began in the summer of 2002, well before authorized by Congress:

On July 17, Franks updated Rumsfeld on the preparatory tasks in the region. He carefully listed the cost of each and the risk to the mission if they didn’t proceed along the timeline which set completion by December 1. Total cost: about \$700 million . . . . Later the president praised Rumsfeld and Franks for this strategy of moving troops in and expanding the infrastructure. “It was, in my judgment,” Bush said, “a very smart recommendation by Don and Tommy to put certain elements in place that could easily be removed and it could be

done so in a way that was quiet so that we didn't create a lot of noise and anxiety." . . . He carefully added, "The pre-positioning of forces should not be viewed as a commitment on my part to use military." He acknowledged with a terse "Right. Yup." that the Afghanistan war and war on terrorism provided the excuse, that it was done covertly, and that it was expensive . . . **By the end of July, Bush had approved some 30 projects that would eventually cost \$700 million. He discussed it with Nicholas E. Calio, the head of White House congressional relations. Congress, which is supposed to control the purse strings, had no real knowledge or involvement, had not even been notified that the Pentagon wanted to reprogram money.**<sup>101</sup>

In his interview on *60 Minutes*, Mr. Woodward himself points out this was a basic violation of the Constitution: "Some people are gonna look at a document called the Constitution which says that no money will be drawn from the Treasury unless appropriated by Congress."<sup>102</sup> The funds were diverted from appropriation laws specifically allocated for the war in Afghanistan.<sup>103</sup>

Third, Seymour Hersh of *The New Yorker* received similar confirmation from his Administration sources of the reallocation of intelligence assets from Afghanistan to Iraq in preparation for an invasion: "The Bush Administration took many intelligence operations that had been aimed at Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups around the world and redirected them to the Persian Gulf. Linguists and special operatives were abruptly reassigned, and several ongoing anti-terrorism intelligence programs were curtailed."<sup>104</sup>

Further, beginning in February 2002, senior White House officials were also confirming to the press that military ouster of Saddam Hussein was inevitable. On February 13, 2002, *Knight Ridder* reported that, according to their sources, "President Bush has decided to oust Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein from power and ordered the CIA, the Pentagon and other agencies to devise a combination of military, diplomatic and covert steps to achieve that goal, senior U.S. officials said Tuesday."<sup>105</sup>

White House officials were also telling Seymour Hersh that the decision to go to war had been made and that a process to support that determination had been created:

**By early March, 2002, a former White House official told me, it was understood by many in the White House that the President had decided, in his own mind, to go to war . . . . The Bush Administration took many intelligence operations that had been aimed at Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups around the world and redirected them to the Persian Gulf. . . . Chalabi's defector reports were now flowing from the Pentagon directly to the Vice-President's office, and then on to the President, with little prior evaluation by intelligence professionals.**<sup>106</sup>

Also, in March 2002, President Bush reportedly poked his head into the office of National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and said **"F\*\*\* Saddam. We're taking him out."**<sup>107</sup> At the time, Rice was meeting with three U.S. Senators and discussing options for dealing with Iraq through the United Nations or other peaceful means. However, a source reported "Bush wasn't interested. He waved his hand dismissively . . . and neatly summed up his Iraq policy in that short phrase. The Senators laughed uncomfortably; Rice flashed a knowing smile."<sup>108</sup>

By late March 2002, Vice President Cheney was telling his fellow Republicans that a decision to invade Iraq had been made:

Dick Cheney dropped by a Senate Republican policy lunch soon after his 10-day tour of the Middle East - the one meant to drum up support for a U.S. military strike against Iraq. . . . Before he spoke, he said no one should repeat what he said, and Senators and staff members promptly put down their pens and pencils. Then he gave them some surprising news. **The question was no longer if the U.S. would attack Iraq, he said. The only question was when.**"<sup>109</sup>

In his book, Bob Woodward describes Cheney as a "powerful, steamrolling force obsessed with Saddam and taking him out."<sup>110</sup>

By July of 2002, Condoleezza Rice was offering further confirmation that President Bush's mind was made up regarding a decision to invade Iraq. At this time, State Department Director of Policy Planning Richard N. Haass held a meeting with Rice and asked if they should discuss Iraq. Rice said, **"Don't bother. The president has made a decision."**<sup>111</sup>

We know that, in early August 2002, President Bush and Prime Minister Blair spoke by telephone and cemented the decision to go to war. A White House official who read the transcript of their conversation disclosed that war was inevitable by the end of the call. **On August 29, 2002, after three months of war exercises conducted by the Pentagon, President Bush reportedly approved a document entitled "Iraq goals, objectives and strategy."**<sup>112</sup> The document cites far-reaching goals and the study refers to "some unstated objectives" including installing a pro-American government in Iraq and using it to influence events in the Middle East, especially in Syria and Iran.<sup>113</sup>

Not only is it clear that a decision had been made to go to war in early 2002, it has also become apparent that the U.S. was actually engaging in acts of war by May 2002. On April 28, 2002, *The New York Times* wrote: "The Bush administration, in developing a potential approach for toppling President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, is concentrating its attention on a major air campaign and ground invasion, with initial estimates contemplating the use of 70,000 to 250,000 troops. . . . Senior officials now acknowledge that any offensive would probably be delayed until early next year, allowing time to create the right military, economic and diplomatic conditions."<sup>114</sup>



Bombing activity designed to increase military pressure on Iraq appears to have commenced by May 2002, and intensified in August 2002, following a meeting of the National Security Council.<sup>115</sup> The *Sunday London Times* reported that, “[b]y the end of August [2002] the raids had become a full air offensive.”<sup>116</sup> As former veteran CIA intelligence officer Ray McGovern testified:

The step-up in bombing was incredible. In March-April of 2002, there were hardly any bombs dropped at all. By the time September came along, several hundred tons of bombs had been dropped. The war had really started.<sup>117</sup>

On May 27, 2002, a former US Air Force combat veteran Tim Goodrich told the World Tribunal on Iraq jury in Istanbul, Turkey: “We were dropping bombs then, and I saw bombing intensify. All the documents coming out now, the Downing Street Memo and others, confirm what I had witnessed in Iraq. The war had already begun while our leaders were telling us that they were going to try all diplomatic options first.”<sup>118</sup> “Tommy Franks, the allied commander, has since admitted that this operation was designed to ‘degrade’ Iraqi air defenses in the same way as the air attacks that began the 1991 Gulf war.”<sup>119</sup>

The United States and Britain initially attempted to justify these raids by claiming that “the rise in air attacks was in response to Iraqi attempts to shoot down allied aircraft.”<sup>120</sup> However, in July 2005, in response to British MP Sir Menzies Campbell’s request for data, the British Ministry of Defence released figures that would indicate that the true reason for the raids was to put pressure on the Iraqis.<sup>121</sup> The data shows that in “the first seven months of 2001 the allies recorded a total of 370 ‘provocations’ by the Iraqis against allied aircraft. But in the seven months between October 2001 and May 2002 there were just 32.”<sup>122</sup> The records show that the allies dropped twice as many bombs on Iraq in the second half of 2002 as they did in the whole of 2001.<sup>123</sup>

The “secret air war” was also confirmed by Iraq war Lieutenant-General Michael Moseley, who said that “in 2002 and early 2003 allied aircraft flew 21,736 sorties, dropping more than 600 bombs on 391 ‘carefully selected targets’ before the war officially started.”<sup>124</sup> Between March and November 2002, coalition forces attacked Iraqi installations with 253,000 pounds of bombs. In June 2002 specifically, forces bombed Iraq with 20,800 pounds of munitions; in September 2002, the tonnage amounted to 109,200 pounds of bombs.<sup>125</sup>

### c. The Downing Street Minutes and Documentary Evidence of an Agreement to go to War

The Downing Street Minutes, which cover a time period from early March 2002 to July 23, 2002, provide the most definitive documentary evidence that the Bush Administration had not only made up its mind to go to war well before it sought congressional authorization, but that it had an agreement with the British government to do so. Collectively, the documents paint a picture of US and British officials eager

to convince the public that war in Iraq was not a foregone conclusion, even as exacting plans for war were being laid. This section of the Report includes a description of each of the critical elements of these documents as they relate to that determination to go to war by the spring and summer of 2002 and details how the Downing Street Minutes have been confirmed and corroborated as accurate. (The Downing Street Minutes also include critical documentary evidence showing Bush and Blair Administration plans concerning “marketing” the war to the public and the United Nations, as well as the manipulation of intelligence, both of which are discussed later in this Report.)

#### i. Description and Analysis of Various Downing Street Minutes Materials

*“Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy.” “It seemed clear that Bush had made up his mind to take military action, even if the timing was not yet decided. But the case was thin.”*

-----July 23, 2002, The Downing Street Minutes<sup>126</sup>

##### Iraq: Options Paper (March 8, 2002)

This paper, prepared by the Office of the Overseas and Defense Secretariat, is the first of four documents written by various British authorities to prepare Prime Minister Blair for his early April trip to Crawford, Texas. The document includes the seeds of the upcoming war plan by the US and lays out a plan by which Iraq would reject a UN ultimatum, paving the way to war.

Besides summarizing various legal and political restraints, the paper warns Blair that a “legal justification for invasion would be needed. Subject to Law Officers advice, none currently exists.”<sup>127</sup> The document also states, “[t]he U.S. has lost confidence in containment. Some in government want Saddam removed. The success of Operation Enduring Freedom [the military code name for the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan], distrust of UN sanctions and inspection regimes, and unfinished business from 1991 are all factors.”<sup>128</sup>

In this document, we learn of a nascent plan that the rejection of United Nations weapons inspectors by Iraq would provide the needed justification for war:

**A refusal to admit UN inspectors, or their admission and subsequent likely frustration, which resulted in an appropriate finding by the Security Council could provide the justification for military action. Saddam would try to prevent this, although he has miscalculated before [sic]. . .**<sup>129</sup>

##### Iraq: Legal Background Paper (Early March 2002)

This document, the second of four papers prepared to brief Prime Minister Blair for his upcoming Crawford trip, describes various legal doctrines believed to be at play with regard to military intervention in Iraq. The most significant aspect of this document is its revelation that the British government did not agree with the Bush Administration's belief that any State can enforce United Nations resolutions. The Bush Administration ultimately relied on this view to justify preemptive war one year later.

One analysis of Security Council Resolutions suggests that, while the British hold the view that "it is for [the Security] Council to assess whether any such breach of those obligations has occurred," the United States has **"a rather different view: they maintain that the assessment of breach is for individual member States. We are not aware of any other State which supports this view."**<sup>130</sup> The paper also notes that "for the exercise of the right of self-defence there must be more than 'a threat.' There has to be an armed attack actual or imminent."<sup>131</sup>

#### David Manning Memo (March 14, 2002)

This memo was prepared by British national security advisor David Manning after having dinner with Condoleezza Rice. He observes that Ms. Rice is seen as an unalloyed advocate of military action against Iraq and again emphasizes how an ultimatum to Iraq on weapons inspectors could be helpful politically.

David Manning advises Prime Minister Tony Blair that President Bush had yet to find the answers to the "big" questions, such as: how to persuade international opinion that military action against Iraq is necessary and justified; what value to put on the exiled Iraqi opposition; how to coordinate a US/allied military campaign with internal opposition (assuming there is any); what happens on the morning after?<sup>132</sup>

Manning also wrote, "[t]he issue of the weapons inspectors must be handled in a way that would persuade European and wider opinion that the US was conscious of the international framework, and the insistence of many countries on the need for a legal base. Renewed refusal [sic] by Saddam to accept unfettered inspections would be a powerful argument."<sup>133</sup>

Manning also attempted to prepare Blair for his upcoming trip to Crawford: "I think there is a real risk that the Administration underestimates the difficulties. They may agree that failure isn't an option, but this really does not mean that they will avoid it." The memo went on to say: **"Condi's enthusiasm for regime change is undimmed."**<sup>134</sup>

#### The Meyer Memo (March 18, 2002)

In this memo from Christopher Meyer, the British Ambassador in Washington, to David Manning, we first learn that the British had agreed to join the Bush Administration in backing regime change through military action. The British also

suggest giving Hussein an ultimatum that he would reject as a way of justifying war. In the memo, the Ambassador describes a lunch he recently had with Paul Wolfowitz, then US Deputy Secretary of Defense:

On Iraq I opened by sticking very closely to the script that you used with Condi Rice last week. **We backed regime change, but the plan had to be clever and failure was not an option.** It would be a tough sell for us domestically, and probably tougher elsewhere in Europe. The US could go it alone if it wanted to. But if it wanted to act with partners, there had to be a strategy for building support for military action against Saddam. **I then went through the need to wrongfoot [sic] Saddam on the inspectors and the UN SCRs [Security Council Resolutions] and the critical importance of the MEPP [Middle East Peace Process] as an integral part of the anti-Saddam strategy.** If all this could be accomplished skilfully, we were fairly confident that a number of countries would come on board.<sup>135</sup>

Meyer goes on to note that “Wolfowitz said that it was absurd to deny the link between terrorism and Saddam.”<sup>136</sup> Meyer told Wolfowitz that “if the UK were to join the US in any operation against Saddam, we would have to be able to take a critical mass of parliamentary and public opinion with us.”<sup>137</sup>

Mr. Meyer had previously recalled that in the fall of 2001, Blair told Bush he should not get distracted from the war on terror. As noted above, Bush replied, **“I agree with you Tony. We must deal with this first. But when we have dealt with Afghanistan, we must come back to Iraq.”**<sup>138</sup> This statement of intent by President Bush with regard to Iraq was made at a private White House dinner between the leaders on September 20, 2001.

#### The Ricketts Memo (March 22, 2002)

Peter Ricketts, the Political Director of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, wrote this memo to the U.K. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw as the third of four documents advising the Prime Minister on his trip to Crawford. This memo is an early indication that at least the British were concerned that unmanipulated intelligence did not provide a strong case for Iraq possessing dangerous WMD that could target the United States.

In the memo, Ricketts expressed relief at the postponement of the publication of a dossier that detailed the limited state of Iraq's weapons program: “My meeting yesterday showed that there is more work to do to ensue [sic] that the figures are accurate and consistent with those of the U.S.”<sup>139</sup> Ricketts goes on to argue that “even the best survey of Iraq's WMD programmes will not show much advance in recent years on the nuclear, missile or CW/BW [chemical weapons/biological weapons] fronts: the programmes are extremely worrying but have not, as far as we know, been stepped up.”<sup>140</sup>

Ricketts offered one final piece of advice: "The truth is that what has changed is not the pace of Saddam Hussein's WMD programmes, but our tolerance of them post-11 September . . . attempts to claim otherwise publicly will increase scepticism about our case."<sup>141</sup>

#### The Straw Memo (March 25, 2002)

U.K. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw wrote this final of four memos to Tony Blair before his April trip to Crawford.<sup>142</sup> The memo confirms once again that the Bush Administration anticipates military action to remove Saddam Hussein and again advocates the efficacy of delivering a legal ultimatum to Iraq. Straw emphasizes the need for a legal justification for military action, and the fact that "we have a long way to go" to convince the public that regime change is acceptable.<sup>143</sup>

According to Secretary Straw, the legal obstacles are difficult to surmount:

**regime change per se is no justification for military action; it could form part of the method of any strategy, but not a goal.** Of course, we may want credibly to assert that regime change is an essential part of the strategy by which we have to achieve our ends - that of the elimination of Iraq's WMD capacity: but the latter has to be the goal.<sup>144</sup>

Echoing the advice of Peter Ricketts, Straw notes that "[o]bjectively, the threat from Iraq has not worsened as a result of 11 September."<sup>145</sup> Straw cautions Blair that "[t]he rewards from your visit to Crawford will be few" and that, while the U.S. has "assumed regime change as a means of eliminating Iraq's WMD threat," virtually no assessment "has satisfactorily answered how that regime change is to be secured, and how there can be any certainty that the replacement regime will be better."<sup>146</sup> Straw also writes to Blair: "I believe that a demand for the unfettered readmission of weapons inspectors is essential, in terms of public explanation, and in terms of legal sanction for any subsequent military action."<sup>147</sup>

#### The Cabinet Office Paper (July 21, 2002)

The British Cabinet Office prepared a briefing paper for participants at the upcoming July 23 meeting from which the Downing Street Minutes would be generated. The paper reiterates that Prime Minister Blair had already agreed to back military action to eliminate Saddam Hussein's regime at the April summit in Crawford, Texas and again confirms US determination to go to war.

The memo again highlights the need to make an ultimatum for Hussein that he would reject, and expresses concern about US preparedness for occupying Iraq:

**[I]t is necessary to create the conditions in which we could legally support military action.** Otherwise we face the real danger that the US will commit themselves to a course of action which we would find very difficult to support .



. . US plans assume, as a minimum, the use of British bases in Cyprus and Diego Garcia . . . [i]t is just possible that an ultimatum could be cast in terms which Saddam would reject (because he is unwilling to accept unfettered access) and which would not be regarded as unreasonable by the international community . . . [a] post-war occupation of Iraq could lead to a protracted and costly nation-building exercise. As already made clear, the US military plans are virtually silent on this point.<sup>148</sup>

The Cabinet Office Paper also provides additional evidence of the concerted strategy to use the United Nations route as a pretext for war. The Paper confirms the now accepted notion that the United Nations could be used as an excuse for going to war, and broaches the idea of using the United Nations to create a legal deadline for military action. The Paper states, “[w]e need to set a deadline, leading to an ultimatum. It would be preferable to obtain backing of a UNSCR [United Nations Security Council Resolution] for any ultimatum and early work would be necessary to explore with Kofi Annan and the Russians, in particular, the scope for achieving this.”<sup>149</sup> Significantly, the Cabinet Office Paper goes on to conclude that the onus is on the United States to insure that the preconditions for war are met, writing, the Bush Administration would need to “creat[e] the conditions necessary to justify government military action . . .”<sup>150</sup>

#### The Downing Street Minutes (July 23, 2002)

The July 23, 2002 Downing Street Minutes, the most important and well publicized of the Downing Street Minutes materials – sometimes described as the “smoking gun memo” – is a document obtained from an undisclosed source that contains the minutes taken during a meeting among the highest officials in the United Kingdom government and defense intelligence figures. The British authorities discuss the build up to the Iraq invasion of March 2003, and it is clear to those attending that President Bush intends to remove Saddam Hussein from power by force. The minutes run through military options and then consider a political strategy by which an appeal for support would be positively received by the public. They again suggest that President Bush issue an ultimatum for Saddam to allow back United Nations weapons inspectors, and that this tactic would help to make the use of force legal. Tony Blair is quoted as saying that under these conditions the British public would support regime change.<sup>151</sup>

Perhaps the most important passage in the July 23 Minutes is a report of a recent visit to Washington by Sir Richard Dearlove, head of MI-6 and known in official terminology as “C”:

C reported on his recent talks in Washington. There was a perceptible shift in attitude. Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy. The NSC had no patience with the UN route, and no enthusiasm for

publishing material on the Iraqi regime's record. There was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath after military action.<sup>152</sup>

The Minutes also record British Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon as saying, "the U.S. had already begun 'spikes of activity' to put pressure on the regime."<sup>153</sup> In addition, Foreign Secretary Straw articulates his idea for justifying an attack in light of the fact that Saddam was not threatening to attack his neighbors and his weapons of mass destruction program was less extensive than those of a number of other countries: **"We should work up a plan for an ultimatum to Saddam to allow back in the UN weapons inspectors. This would also help with the legal justification for the use of force."**<sup>154</sup>

The British realized they needed "help with the legal justification for the use of force" because, as the British Attorney General pointed out, "the desire for regime change was not a legal base for military action."<sup>155</sup> Moreover, the Attorney General stated that of the "three possible legal bases: self-defence, humanitarian intervention, or [United Nations Security Council] authorisation," the first two "could not be the base in this case."<sup>156</sup> In other words, Iraq was not attacking the United States or the United Kingdom, so the leaders could not claim to be acting in self-defense; nor was Iraq's leadership in the process of committing genocide, so the United States and the United Kingdom could not claim to be invading for humanitarian reasons. This left Security Council authorization as the only conceivable legal justification for war.

At this point in the meeting Prime Minister Tony Blair weighed in. Responding to his minister's suggestion about drafting an ultimatum demanding that Saddam let United Nations inspectors back in the country, Blair acknowledged that such an ultimatum could be politically critical – but only if the Iraqi leader turned it down:

**The Prime Minister said that it would make a big difference politically and legally if Saddam refused to allow in the UN inspectors. Regime change and WMD were linked in the sense that it was the regime that was producing the WMD. . . . If the political context were right, people would support regime change. The two key issues were whether the military plan worked and whether we had the political strategy to give the military plan the space to work**<sup>157</sup>

As if there were any doubt about the intentions of using the United Nations to provoke war, U.K. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw observes, "[w]e should explore discreetly the ultimatum. Saddam would continue to play hard-ball with the UN."<sup>158</sup>

## **ii. Confirmation and Corroboration of Downing Street Minutes Materials**

While the Bush Administration has sought to either ignore or diminish the Downing Street Minutes, they have ultimately proved to be important not only because they were in documentary form, but also because of their source, a critical

Bush Administration ally. Unlike other disclosures by ex-Administration officials and others, which the White House has characterized as biased, these disclosures cannot be dismissed as mere sour grapes.<sup>159</sup>

As Cindy Sheehan stated so eloquently at the June 10, 2005 hearing on the Downing Street Minutes, convened by Representative Conyers: "I am even more convinced now, that this aggression on Iraq was based on a lie of historic proportions and was blatantly unnecessary. The so-called Downing Street Memo dated 23 July 2002, only confirms what I already suspected, the leadership of his [sic] country rushed us into an illegal invasion of another sovereign country on prefabricated and cherry-picked intelligence. Iraq was no threat to the United States of America, and the devastating sanctions and bombing against the Iraqis were working."<sup>160</sup>

Our research indicates there is little doubt as to the accuracy of the Downing Street Minutes and related documents. Sources within the Blair and Bush Administrations have confirmed their accuracy, and we have been able to independently confirm and corroborate the major precepts of the various documents.

It is telling that when the Downing Street Minutes were first published by the *Sunday London Times*, shortly before the 2005 British election, the Blair Administration chose not to deny their authenticity. Shortly after the Minutes were released, sources within both the Bush and Blair Administrations confirmed their accuracy to the press. A former senior US official told *Knight Ridder* that the Downing Street Minutes were "an absolutely accurate description of what transpired."<sup>161</sup> Two senior British officials, who asked not to be further identified because of the sensitivity of the material, told *Newsweek* in separate interviews that they had no reason to question the authenticity of the Downing Street Minutes.<sup>162</sup>

In addition, elements of the Downing Street Minutes can be independently corroborated. Consider the core, specific provisions of the July 23 Downing Street Minutes from Richard Dearlove, in which he describes his recent discussions with the Bush Administration:

- **By mid-July 2002, eight months before the war began, President Bush had decided to "remove Saddam, through military action."**

This statement that "Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action" has been proven true – on March 20, 2003, the U.S. military invaded Iraq and follow-up aspects of the Downing Street Minutes bear out that this decision was made well in advance of the war. In addition to the wealth of verification in Sections III(A)(1), (2), and (4) of this Report, and in particular as noted in the previous section, we know that in early August 2002, President Bush and Prime Minister Blair spoke by telephone. It was a short call, about 15 minutes. According to a White House official who has studied the transcript of the phone call, "The way it read was that, come what may, Saddam was going to go; they said they were going forward, they were going to take out the regime, and they were doing the right thing. Blair did not need any

convincing. There was no 'come on Tony, we've got to get you on board.' I remember reading it then and thinking, O.K., now I know what we're going to be doing for the next year."<sup>163</sup> Before the call, this official says, he had the impression that the probability of invasion was high, but still below 100 percent. Afterward, he says, "it was a done deal."<sup>164</sup>

It is also worth noting that in March 2003, Tony Blair reportedly said, "[l]eft to himself, Bush would have gone to war in January. No, not January, but back in September."<sup>165</sup>

- **Bush had decided to "justify" the war "by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD."**

This statement is borne out by the entire "marketing campaign," which fixated on these twin justifications (see Section III(A)(4) of this Report). For example, the Bush Administration formed the White House Iraq Group (WHIG) in August 2002 to persuade the public of Saddam's supposed threat and to market the war. The Administration waited to introduce the WHIG's product to the public until September 2002, because, as White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card told *The New York Times* in an unusually candid interview, "[y]ou don't introduce new products in August."<sup>166</sup>

- **Already "the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy."**

The statement that "the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy" is confirmed by the multi-layered effort by the Administration to pressure officials within the Administration to find links between Saddam and September 11 and to manipulate intelligence officials and agencies into overstating WMD threats (see Section III(B) of this Report).

- **Many at the top of the administration "had no patience" with the UN route."**

This statement is consistent with the realities of the Bush Administration's intentions at the time. For example, Vice President Cheney's stated opinion was that there was no need to seek any approval from the UN to invade. He has stated: "A return of inspectors would provide no assurance whatsoever of his compliance with UN resolutions. On the contrary, there is great danger that it would provide false comfort that Saddam was somehow 'back in the box.'"<sup>167</sup> Mr. Cheney, like other administration "hard-liners," was said to have feared "the UN route" not because it might fail but because it might succeed and thereby prevent a war that they were convinced had to be fought."<sup>168</sup>

- **"There was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath of military action."**

Unfortunately, this statement has been verified by events following the war (see below). Among other things, in an ironic assessment of the events to follow, Vice President Dick Cheney made an appearance on *Meet the Press* and stated that

the war was not going to be long, costly or bloody because “we will be greeted as liberators.”<sup>169</sup> As the war unfolded, numerous gaps in planning became apparent.

- **The US had already begun “spikes of activity” to put pressure on the regime.**

The statement that the US had already begun “spikes of activity” to pressure Iraq has been subsequently confirmed by numerous accounts (see below). As reported in the *Sunday London Times*, in May 2002, with a conditional agreement in place with Britain for war, the US and UK began to conduct a bombing campaign in Iraq described by British and US officials as “spikes of activity” designed to put pressure on the Iraqi regime.<sup>170</sup> The bombing campaign was initiated a full ten months before the Bush Administration determined that all diplomatic means had been exhausted and six months before Congressional authorization for the use of force.<sup>171</sup>

- **The British believed “[w]e should work up a plan for an ultimatum to Saddam to allow back in the UN weapons inspectors. This would also help with the legal justification or the use of force.”<sup>172</sup>**

The initiative of the British to go back to the UN to force an “ultimatum” has also been proven true (see Section III(A)(5) of this Report). The U.S. and Britain asked for UN authorization to demand the reintroduction of weapons inspectors, which they received on November 8, 2002.

Other documents released in conjunction with the Downing Street Minutes have also been independently corroborated. For example, the Cabinet Office Paper from July 21, 2002 and the Iraq Options Paper from March 8, 2002 include the following:

- **Blair had already agreed to back military action to get rid of Saddam Hussein at a summit in Crawford, Texas in April 2002.**

This agreement has been corroborated by numerous sources, including British newspapers *The Guardian*<sup>173</sup> and *The Daily Telegraph*.<sup>174</sup>

- **US plans assume, at a minimum, the use of British bases in Cyprus and Diego Garcia.**

This plan came to fruition. Akrotiri, the British air base in Cyprus, has been used extensively since the beginning of the war as a refueling and resupply base for U.S. and British aircraft and warships.<sup>175</sup> At the start of the war, the US also used the base in Diego Garcia.<sup>176</sup>

- **UK contribution could include deployment of a Division (*i.e.* Gulf War-sized contribution plus naval and air forces) to making available bases.**

Britain did provide a sizable troop contribution, with over 11,000 troops currently in Iraq.<sup>177</sup>



- An international coalition is necessary to provide military platform and desirable for political purposes, even though this coalition was made up of small powers, since the US would probably not receive the support of the major powers for UN authorization.

The US ended up gathering a number of small powers to form an “international coalition,” including, among others, Armenia, Bulgaria, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Mongolia, and Poland.<sup>178</sup>

- “Time will be required to prepare public opinion in the UK that it is necessary to take military action against Saddam Hussein. There would also need to be a substantial effort to secure the support of Parliament. An information campaign will be needed which has to be closely related to an overseas information campaign designed to influence Saddam Hussein, the Islamic World and the wider international community.”<sup>179</sup>

The British Administration engaged in such a marketing campaign, with the Prime Minister persuading the Parliament and public of the case for war.<sup>180</sup>

- “The optimal times to start action are in early spring.”

The war began on March 20, 2003, the first day of spring.

#### d. Manipulating Public Opinion

*“From a marketing point of view ... you don't introduce new products in August.”*

-----August 2002, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card commenting on the formation of the White House Iraq Group (WHIG) to market the war.

The Bush Administration manipulated public opinion by engaging in what Andrew Card, President Bush's Chief of Staff, described as a “marketing” plan to justify the war.<sup>181</sup> In retrospect, it is apparent that this marketing plan was decided and implemented well before Mr. Card's admission. The Downing Street Minutes, written in the spring and summer of 2002, provide valuable insights into the upcoming marketing of the justifications for war. Not only was the British government well aware of the planned U.S. marketing campaign, but it too, was planning to engage in such an effort. Thus, the Cabinet Officer Paper notes that ministers are planning to “[a]gree to the establishment of an ad hoc group of officials under Cabinet Office Chairmanship to consider the development of an information campaign to be agreed with the U.S.”<sup>182</sup>

In August 2002, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld ramped up the rhetoric to a significant degree, comparing Saddam Hussein to Adolph Hitler, and deriding those

asking the Bush Administration to substantiate their Weapons of Mass Destruction claims:

Think of the prelude to World War Two. Think of all the countries that said, well, we don't have enough evidence. I mean, Mein Kampf had been written. Hitler had indicated what he intended to do. **Maybe he won't attack us. Maybe he won't do this or that. Well, there were millions of people dead because of the miscalculations.** The people who argued for waiting for more evidence have to ask themselves how they are going to feel at that point where another event occurs.<sup>183</sup>

By August 2002, the "so-called" White House Iraq Group (WHIG) was formed as a coordinating center to convince the public of the need for the Iraq war. The group met weekly in the White House Situation Room. Among its participants were Karl Rove; Karen Hughes; Mary Matalin; James R. Wilkinson; legislative liaison Nicholas E. Calio; Condoleezza Rice and her deputy, Stephen J. Hadley; and Scooter Libby.<sup>184</sup> According to *The Washington Post*, "the escalation of nuclear rhetoric a year ago, including the introduction of the term 'mushroom cloud' into the debate, coincided with the formation of a White House Iraq Group."<sup>185</sup> It was reportedly created to persuade the public, the Congress and allies of the need to invade Iraq.<sup>186</sup>

During this time period, there is additional evidence of other Bush Administration officials seeking to manipulate public opinion to support war. For example, ABC News reported that officials both inside and outside the government said the Bush Administration would emphasize the danger of Saddam's weapons to gain the legal justification for war from the United Nations and also emphasize the danger at home to Americans, "'We were not lying,' said one official. 'But it was just a matter of emphasis.'"<sup>187</sup> Consider also Paul Wolfowitz's statement regarding why Iraq's supposed control over weapons of mass destruction was ultimately used to pitch the public on the war: "[F]or bureaucratic reasons, we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction (as justification for invading Iraq) because it was the one reason everyone could agree on."<sup>188</sup>

Early September was a critical period in the WHIG's existence. It was on September 6 that *The New York Times* reported that Andrew Card explained the reason for delaying the roll-out of their pro-war campaign: "**From a marketing point of view ... you don't introduce new products in August.**"<sup>189</sup> It is quite telling that he referred to their Iraq war initiative as a "product." Another senior Administration official made the following admission when asked why our nation really went to war: "As it was, the administration took what looked like the path of least resistance in making its public case for the war: WMD and intelligence links with Al Qaeda. If the public read too much into those links and thought Saddam had a hand in September 11, so much the better."<sup>190</sup>

Two days later, on September 8, the "marketing" campaign began in earnest. As described in one publication:

The PR campaign intensified Sunday, September 8 . . . in a choreographed performance worthy of *Riverdance*, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Powell, Condoleezza Rice and Gen. Richard Myers said on separate talk shows that the aluminum tubes, suitable only for centrifuges, proved Iraq's pursuit of nuclear weapons."<sup>191</sup>

Frank Rich describes the flurry of activity on that day:

All the references to nuclear threats were beginning to have their intended impact. As *The Washington Post* recounts, the administration's talk of clandestine centrifuges, nuclear blackmail and mushroom clouds had a powerful political effect, particularly on Senators who were facing fall election campaigns. "When you hear about nuclear weapons, this is the national security knock-out punch," said Senator Ron Wyden.<sup>192</sup>

In early October, in advance of a congressional vote to authorize military action, the WHIG released a "white paper." The paper is based on the rushed, confidential CIA intelligence assessment. As *Newsweek* reported:

The publicly released white paper unequivocally backed up the White House's case about the dangers posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs. It stated boldly and without caveats in the first paragraph that Baghdad "has chemical and biological weapons" and "if left unchecked, it probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade." If Iraq obtains sufficient weapons-grade material from abroad, the white paper further warned, Baghdad could make a nuclear weapon "within a year." To support its conclusions about an Iraqi nuclear program, it prominently cited, among other factors, Iraq's "aggressive attempts" to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes—an effort that Miller and her colleague Michael Gordon had first written about in an influential front-page story for the *New York Times* the previous September [apparently based on a leak from Scooter Libby]. . . . But . . . the more detailed version of the NIE was hardly stronger. In fact, it revealed for the first time, in the very first paragraph—right after the sentence that "if left unchecked, [Iraq] probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade"—the fact that the State Department's intelligence arm, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), had an "alternative view" of the matter.<sup>193</sup>

The more detailed, classified NIE also included the State and Energy Departments' dissents about the intended use of aluminum tubes. Both agencies had concluded that the tubes were not suited for use in centrifuges. Yet the publicly released white paper mentioned no disagreement on the aluminum tubes issue, removed qualifiers and added language to distort the severity of the threat.<sup>194</sup>

Communications Director James Wilkinson, who played a prominent role in the writing of the white paper, emphasized the importance the group placed on nuclear threat imagery, no matter how attenuated:

**By summer 2002, the White House Iraq Group assigned Communications Director James R. Wilkinson to prepare a white paper for public release, describing the "grave and gathering danger" of Iraq's allegedly "reconstituted" nuclear weapons program. Wilkinson gave prominent place to the claim that Iraq "sought uranium oxide, an essential ingredient in the enrichment process, from Africa." That claim, along with repeated use of the "mushroom cloud" image by top officials beginning in September, became the emotional heart of the case against Iraq. The uranium claims had never been significant to career analysts -- Iraq had plenty already and lacked the means to enrich it. But the allegations proved irresistible to the White House Iraq Group, which devised the war's communications strategy and included Libby among its members. Every layman understood the connection between uranium and the bomb, participants in the group said in interviews at the time, and it was the easiest way for the Bush administration to raise alarms.<sup>195</sup>**

This characterization of the WHIG and its product, as using a no-holds barred approach to develop strategy and rhetoric designed to pursue war, is consistent with what we have learned from other sources. For example, Bush Administration officials who observed the white paper's development noted that the WHIG "wanted gripping images and stories not available in the hedged and austere language of intelligence."<sup>196</sup> Even Bush Administration supporter David Brooks was forced to acknowledge "from Day One," the Bush White House "decided our public relations is not going to be honest."<sup>197</sup>

The strong congressional vote on October 11, was also aided in large part by the timing – less than one month before the mid-term elections. This favorable timing was not an accident. Among other things, it was anticipated as early as the July 23 Downing Street meeting that war's timing would be premised on United States elections. According to the British Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon, no decisions had been taken, but "the most likely timing in U.S. minds for military action to begin was January, with the timeline beginning 30 days before the U.S. Congressional elections."<sup>198</sup> Although the eventual date slipped because of delays regarding UN approval, it is quite telling that the British thought that military engagement would commence at such a politically opportunistic time. Former United States Ambassador Raphael, who was involved in Iraq policy, acknowledged much of the timing was premised on United States elections when he said that the Administration was "not prepared" when it invaded Iraq due to "clear political pressure, election driven and calendar driven."<sup>199</sup>

Also, on September 12, 2002, President Bush gave a speech at the United Nations in which he declared that "Iraq has answered a decade of U.N. demands with

a decade of defiance.”<sup>200</sup> Simultaneous with Bush’s United Nations speech, the White House released a report, “A Decade of Deception and Defiance,” seeking to set forth evidence that Iraq was violating bans on possessing chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.<sup>201</sup>

Other reports on the manner in which the Bush Administration was planning its campaign to convince the public and the Congress of the need for war further confirm the sense that this was more a public relations endeavor than an honest and frank sharing of information with the American public. For example, in December 2002, when the President was being briefed on WMD evidence, his basic concern appears to have been with the public relations value of the information, rather than its actual efficacy. Bob Woodward reported that when Deputy CIA Director John McLaughlin presented his best evidence of weapons of mass destruction, complete with satellite photos and flip charts, the President responded by exclaiming **“Nice try, but that isn’t gonna sell Joe Public. That isn’t gonna convince Joe Public. . . . This is the best we’ve got?”**<sup>202</sup>

By January, of course, there were fewer and fewer doubts that the decision to go to war had been made. As noted in Bob Woodward’s “Plan of Attack,” January was when the Bush White House **“was planning a big rollout of speeches and documents”** to advance the war.<sup>203</sup> By January 12, 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell had become exasperated with the head long push for war. State Department officials have said that after White House meetings, Secretary Colin Powell would return to his office on the seventh floor of the State Department, roll his eyes and say, “Jeez, what a fixation about Iraq.”<sup>204</sup> In this regard, another Administration official added, “I do believe certain people have grown theological about this. It’s almost a religion – that it will be the end of our society if we don’t take action now.”<sup>205</sup>

Finally, on January 28, 2003, President Bush gave his State of the Union Speech, in which he declared the now infamous 16 words: “The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.”<sup>206</sup> Again, in retrospect, this uranium reference appears to have been part and parcel of the pre-meditated marketing plan launched earlier that summer. It has been reported that one of the speech writers conceded the phrase’s marketing impact: **“For a speech writer, uranium was valuable because anyone could see its connection to an atomic bomb.”**<sup>207</sup>

Just as the Bush Administration engaged in a public relations style campaign to convince the nation to support the war, the record shows it also sought to manipulate public opinion to convince the American public that the upcoming occupation would be straight forward and relatively peaceful. Prior to the war, senior members of the Bush Administration repeatedly downplayed the risks and overstated the ease of the occupation. For example, rejecting Army Secretary Eric Shinseki’s assessment that the mission would require large numbers of troops for a long duration, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz stated: “I am reasonably certain that they will greet us as liberators, and that will help us to keep requirements down. In short, we don’t

know what the requirement will be, but we can say with reasonable confidence that the notion of hundreds of thousands of American troops is way off the mark.”<sup>208</sup>

Later, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld echoed these remarks, stating that “[t]he idea that it would take several hundred thousand U.S. forces I think is far off the mark”<sup>209</sup> Vice President Dick Cheney made an appearance on *Meet the Press* and stated that the war would be quick and easy: “I really do believe that we will be greeted as liberators. I’ve talked with a lot of Iraqis in the last several months myself. . . . The read we get on the people of Iraq is there is no question but what they want to get rid of Saddam Hussein and they will welcome as liberators the United States when we come to do that.”<sup>210</sup>

Also in this regard, comprehensive reports written by four ex-CIA analysts and led by former Deputy Director Richard Kerr found:

**Policymakers worried more about making the case for the war; particularly the claim that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, than planning for the aftermath. . . . In an ironic twist, the policy community was receptive to technical intelligence (the weapons program), where the analysis was wrong, but apparently paid little attention to intelligence on cultural and political issues (post-Saddam Iraq), where the analysis was right.”**<sup>211</sup>

The evidence we have identified indicates that the Bush Administration deliberately chose to downplay real and credible risks regarding the occupation in order to help make the strongest case for war for the public. Thus, for example, in January 2003, when President Jacques Chirac’s top advisor, Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, warned Condoleezza Rice that the war would lead to an increase in terrorism, the National Security Advisor ignored the warnings:

**Gourdault-Montagne talked of the unrest that would no doubt erupt among Iraq’s many ethnic groups, and he warned of increased terror. Rice pooh-poohed his every objection. “Everything was dismissed,” says a French diplomat, recalling Rice’s reaction. “There is terror already in the world and the rest of the Arab world won’t feel resentment. If it does, the leaders of the Arab world will support the administration.” . . . “Every good reason not to go to war was irrelevant.” It was clear, says this diplomat, ‘that the decision to go to war was taken.’”**<sup>212</sup>

As a matter of fact, it has been reported that the National Intelligence Council specifically warned President Bush in January 2003 that “the conflict could spark factional violence and an anti-U.S. insurgency . . . [o]ne of the reports said the U.S.-led occupation could ‘increase popular sympathy for terrorist objectives.’”<sup>213</sup>

State Department officials warned not only about the lack of planning for the occupation, but also of future human rights abuses in Iraq. On February 7, 2003, one month before the U.S. invasion, three State Department bureau chiefs prepared a



secret memo for their superior and cited “serious planning gaps for post-conflict public security and humanitarian assistance.”<sup>214</sup> The State Department officials noted that the military was reluctant “to take on ‘policing’ roles” in Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.<sup>215</sup> The three officials also warned that “a failure to address short-term public security and humanitarian assistance concerns could result in serious human rights abuses which would undermine an otherwise successful military campaign, and our reputation internationally.”<sup>216</sup> Again, these risks were ignored by the Bush Administration’s intent on developing the strongest possible case for war.

The Downing Street Minutes also indicate that the United Kingdom had sought to warn the Bush Administration of the perils of post-war occupancy. In the spring of 2002, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw wrote, “we have a long way to go to convince [the Bush Administration] as to . . . whether the consequence of military action really would be a compliant law abiding replacement government.”<sup>217</sup>

There is also considerable evidence indicating that the Bush Administration went into armed conflict in Iraq without a real or viable plan for the occupation. United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, in writing a memo to Prime Minister Blair concerning his upcoming April 2002 trip to Crawford, Texas, expressed alarm at the Bush Administration’s failure to consider these issues. He wrote:

We have also to answer the big question – what will this action achieve? There seems to be a larger hole in this than on anything. Most of the assessments from the U.S. have assumed regime change as a means of eliminating Iraq’s [weapons of mass destruction] threat. But no one has satisfactorily answered how that regime change is to be secured, and how there can be any certainty that the replacement regime will be better.<sup>218</sup>

Around the same time, British Foreign Policy Advisor David Manning wrote a memo to Prime Minister Blair in which, based on Manning’s dinner with Condoleezza Rice, he continued to express concern regarding the lack of United States preparation for an Iraq occupation: “From what [Rice] said, Bush has yet to find the answers to the big questions including what happens on the morning after?”<sup>219</sup> Later on in the memo, Manning again raises questions regarding the Bush Administration’s preparedness for a post-occupation of Iraq noting, “I think there is a real risk that the Administration underestimates the difficulties. They may agree that failure isn’t an option, but this does not mean that they will avoid it. Will the Sunni majority really respond to an uprising led by Kurds and Shias? Will Americans really put in enough ground troops to do the job if the Kurdish/Shi’ite stratagem fails?”<sup>220</sup>

Perhaps most famously, in the Downing Street Minutes, when “C,” (Sir Richard Dearlove) reported on his recent discussions in Washington, he discerned that the Bush Administration was not focused on post-occupation issues. Mr. Dearlove noted, “[t]here was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath after military action.”<sup>221</sup> While the British at least seemed concerned about the risks of “nation building,” their impression was that the Bush Administration was blithely ignoring

these matters. Further, as detailed in the Cabinet Office Paper, “[a] post-war occupation of Iraq could lead to a protracted and costly nation-building exercise. As already made clear, the U.S. military plans are virtually silent on this point.”<sup>222</sup>

Finally, we now know that a classified State Department report, disclosed by *The Los Angeles Times*, concluded that it was unlikely that installing a new government in Iraq would encourage the spread of democracy in the region. The paper found that in the unlikely event a democracy did take root in Iraq, it would likely result in an Islamic-controlled government antipathetic to the United States.<sup>223</sup>

**e. Using the United Nations as a Pretext for War**

*The United States was “ready to discredit inspections in favor of disarmament.”*

----October 2002 statement by Vice President Cheney, recounted by Iraq Survey Group head Hans Blix as a “pretty straight way . . . of saying that if we did not soon find the weapons of mass destruction that the U.S. was convinced Iraq possessed . . . , the U.S. would be ready to say that the inspectors were useless and embark on disarmament by other means.”<sup>224</sup>

The manipulation and marketing of the Iraq war by the Bush Administration extended beyond domestic opinion to include the United Nations as well. Our review indicates that the very concept of seeking UN resolutions was merely to provide an ultimatum that Iraq would reject. Moreover, from the time the Bush Administration committed to obtaining United Nations approval in September 2002, it engaged in a series of actions intended to pursue military action regardless of the efficacy of the United Nations Security Council process.

From the very outset, the Bush Administration was antagonistic to any successes the United Nation inspectors may have achieved. It pursued language that would most easily have paved the way for war and then sought to discredit the very inspections process the Security Council had just approved. When the weapons inspections process appeared to be working and the votes appeared lacking to obtain a Security Council vote to authorize war, President Bush and Prime Minister Blair met on January 31, 2003, to discuss alternative scenarios of provoking war. Finally, when the plan to provoke war failed and the Security Council made clear it would not authorize military action, the Bush Administration was forced to adopt a contorted and extreme view of international law in order to justify military intervention.

As early as August 2002, British Foreign Secretary Straw arrived in the Hamptons to “discreetly explore [an] ultimatum [given to Saddam Hussein]” with Secretary of State Powell.<sup>225</sup> As Bob Woodward notes in his book “Plan of Attack,” Mr. Straw told the Secretary, “If you are really thinking about war and you want us Brits to be a player, we cannot be unless you go to the United Nations.”<sup>226</sup>

As we now know, this course of action was set forth in the various Downing Street Minutes materials described earlier in Section III(A)(3) of this Report. The deceptiveness of this course of events has not been lost on other observers. As Mark Danner of the *New York Review of Books* has written, these discussions were not about preserving the peace, or even allowing the inspectors to do the job, but about finding a legal justification for war:

Though 'the UN route' would be styled as an attempt to avoid war, its essence, as the Downing Street memo makes clear, was a strategy to make the war possible, partly by making it politically palatable . . . [t]hus, the idea of UN inspectors was introduced not as a means to avoid war, as President Bush repeatedly assured Americans, but as a means to make war possible. War had been decided on; the problem under discussion here was how to make, in the prime minister's words, 'the political context . . . right' . . . [t]he demand that Iraq accept UN inspectors, especially if refused, could form the political bridge by which the allies could reach their goal: 'regime change' through 'military action.'<sup>227</sup>

By September 7, 2002, Woodward detailed a personal visit by Blair to persuade President Bush to go to the United Nations: "It was critical domestically for the Prime Minister to show his own Labour Party, a pacifist party at heart, opposed to war in principle, that he had gone the UN route. Public opinion in the UK favored trying to make international institutions work before resorting to force. Going through the UN would be a large and much-needed plus."<sup>228</sup> The President told Blair that he had decided "to go to the UN" and the Prime Minister, "was relieved."<sup>229</sup> After the session with Blair, Bush walked into a conference room and told the British officials gathered there that "your man has got cojones."<sup>230</sup> This particular conference with Blair would be known, Bush declared, as "the cojones meeting."<sup>231</sup>

Five days later, on September 12, 2002, President Bush announced that the United States would "work with the U.N. Security Council for the necessary resolutions."<sup>232</sup> It is notable that the President envisaged more than one resolution. Almost immediately, however, the Bush Administration began to distance itself from any suggestion that the reintroduction of weapons inspectors would work – the purported purpose of the resolutions:

Four days later, on September 16, Annan stood before the microphones at the U.N. and announced he had received a letter from Iraqi authorities that said Iraq would allow inspectors access "without conditions." . . . White House staffers flew into a rage. In their view Annan was giving Saddam the kind of wiggle room that would allow him to avert military action. Reportedly, later that night, Powell and Rice, in a conference call, chewed out Annan for taking matters into his own hands. . . . [r]elations between the U.N. leadership and the White House deteriorated in the following days as word of American military preparations seeped out . . . Bush's U.N. strategy was becoming clear: the goal was not to get Saddam to disarm through peaceful means,

but rather to get a U.N. stamp of approval for American military action as quickly as possible. Indeed, Bush's speech before the General Assembly was soon seen by the delegates for what it was: a tell-'em-what-they-want-to-hear spiel even though you don't believe it.<sup>233</sup>

Thereafter, the Bush Administration engaged in an effort to discredit the weapons inspectors before they were even able to do their work. For example, on September 19, 2002, Donald Rumsfeld testified before the Senate that "the more inspectors that are in there, the less likely something's going to happen."<sup>234</sup> The same day, President Bush threatened that, "if the United Nations Security Council won't deal with the problem, the United States and some of our friends will."<sup>235</sup> Richard Perle attacked Hans Blix by saying "if it were up to me, on the strength of his previous record, I wouldn't have chosen Hans Blix."<sup>236</sup>

After this initial round of "saber-rattling," the Administration then pursued an extreme – and ultimately unsuccessful – resolution that would have allowed an automatic trigger path to military action. The initial draft of Resolution 1441, prepared by the Bush Administration, threatened the use of "all necessary means" should Iraq fail to comply with strict new inspections.<sup>237</sup> Hans Blix, chief inspector of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission ("UNMOVIC") remarked: "It was so remote from reality . . . [i]t was written by someone who didn't understand how (inspections) function."<sup>238</sup> Lacking the votes, the Bush Administration was forced to abandon the idea of an "automatic trigger," and by November 8, a revised resolution was approved. As Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the British ambassador to the UN, acknowledged: "We heard loud and clear during the negotiations about 'automaticity' and 'hidden triggers'— the concerns that on a decision so crucial we should not rush into military action. . . . Let me be equally clear. . . . There is no 'automaticity' in this Resolution. If there is a further Iraqi breach of its disarmament obligations, the matter will return to the Council for discussion as required."<sup>239</sup>

After this failure, the Bush Administration continued to pursue its strategy of using the United Nations action to justify military action, dismissing the inspection process recently approved by the UN. Almost immediately, United States officials made it clear that the Bush Administration would invade Iraq regardless of the outcome of the recently authorized weapons inspection process. In late November, Richard Perle, a member of the Defense Policy Board, attended a meeting on global security with members of the British Parliament. At one point he argued that the weapons inspection team might be unable to find Saddam's arsenal of banned weapons because they are so well hidden. According to the *London Mirror*, he then states that the US would "attack Iraq even if UN inspectors fail to find weapons," admitting that a "clean bill of health" from UN chief weapons inspector Hans Blix would not halt America's war machine.<sup>240</sup>

On December 7, 2002, the Iraqis issued a 12,000-page document, accounting for the state of Iraq's weapons programs. The Bush Administration immediately asserted that the report constituted a "material breach,"<sup>241</sup> zeroing in on the charge

that the Iraqi declaration failed to mention the now-discredited theory that Iraq was attempting to acquire uranium from Niger.<sup>242</sup> Vice President Cheney went so far as to inform Hans Blix that the purpose of the inspectors was to find WMD, and that war was coming in any event. Blix recounted that Cheney:

stated the position that inspections, if they do not give results, cannot go on forever, and said the U.S. was “ready to discredit inspections in favor of disarmament.” A pretty straight way, I thought, of saying that if we did not soon find the weapons of mass destruction that the U.S. was convinced Iraq possessed (though they did not know where), the U.S. would be ready to say that the inspectors were useless and embark on disarmament by other means.<sup>243</sup>

By December 2002 and January 2003, it was becoming increasingly apparent that the Bush Administration was not providing full cooperation with UN inspection teams. In December, UNMOVIC weapons inspection leader Hans Blix had called on the United States to share its intelligence information with inspectors. “Of course we would like to have as much information from any member state as to evidence they may have on weapons of mass destruction, and, in particular, sites,” he says.<sup>244</sup> “Because we are inspectors, we can go to sites. They may be listening to what’s going on and they may have lots of other sources of information. But we can go to the sites legitimately and legally.”<sup>245</sup> As observed in *The New York Times*: “On one hand, administration officials are pressing him to work faster and send out more inspectors to more places to undermine Baghdad’s ability to conceal any hidden programs. At the same time, Washington has been holding back its intelligence, waiting to see what Iraq will say in its declaration.”<sup>246</sup>

On February 20, 2003, CBS News reported: “UN arms inspectors are privately complaining about the quality of US intelligence and accusing the United States of sending them on wild-goose chases . . . The inspectors have become so frustrated trying to chase down unspecific or ambiguous US leads that they’ve begun to express that anger privately in no uncertain terms . . . UN sources have told CBS News that American tips have lead to one dead end after another.” And whatever intelligence has been provided, reports CBS, has turned out to be “circumstantial, outdated or just plain wrong.”<sup>247</sup>

Moreover, despite repeated assurances of cooperation, the IAEA received no information on the Niger-uranium claim until the day before Powell’s United Nations presentation, even though Bush Administration officials had such information for over a year and provision of information was mandated by U. N. Resolution 1441:

The U.S. Mission in Vienna provided the IAEA with an oral briefing while Jacques Baute was en route to New York, leaving no printed material with the nuclear inspectors. As IAEA officials recount, an astonished Baute told his aides, “That won’t do. I want the actual documentary evidence.” He had to register his complaints through a United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and

Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) channel before receiving the documents the day Powell spoke. It was an incident that would characterize America's intelligence-sharing with the IAEA.<sup>248</sup>

By late January, the UN was not finding any evidence that Iraq had reinitiated its nuclear program, which in turn was leading to a furor in the Bush Administration. Thus on January 27, the UN issued a press release regarding Iraq's response to Resolution 1441 and stated that "it would appear that Iraq had decided in principle to provide cooperation on substance in order to complete the disarmament task through inspection."<sup>249</sup> Although there were some outstanding issues and questions concerning chemical and biological weapons, the press release stated that the UN weapons inspectors had reported that after 60 days of inspections with a total of 139 inspections at 106 locations, they had found "no evidence that Iraq had revived its nuclear weapons programme" and "no prohibited nuclear activities had been identified"<sup>250</sup>

According to Bob Woodward, the accounts of Iraqis cooperating with UN weapons inspectors by opening up buildings "infuriated" President Bush, who believed, in Woodward's words, that the "unanimous international consensus of the November [UN] resolution was beginning to fray."<sup>251</sup> President Bush told Rice that the "pressure isn't holding together." President Bush also commented about the antiwar protests in the United States and Europe.<sup>252</sup>

These issues arose in the run up to Secretary of State Colin Powell's February 5, 2003, presentation to the United Nations Security Council. To the Bush Administration's chagrin, the presentation did not produce a "smoking gun" that would cause other members of the Council to join in efforts to authorize the use of force. Indeed, it now appears clear that by this time, the Bush Administration had no intelligence of its own that could provide hard evidence to support any claim that Saddam Hussein possessed any WMD threatening the United States.

On February 14, Hans Blix appeared before the Security Council and essentially contradicted Powell's presentation: "The trucks that Powell had described as being used for chemical decontamination, Blix said, could just as easily have been used for 'routine activity.' He contradicted Powell's assertion that the Iraqis knew in advance when the inspectors would be arriving. Mohamed ElBaradei of the IAEA weighed in as well, insisting that, at least on the nuclear front, there was no evidence Saddam had any viable program. Further, Blix said that Iraq was finally taking steps toward real cooperation with the inspectors, allowing them to enter Iraqi presidential palaces, among other previously proscribed sites."<sup>253</sup>

On February 24, 2003, the Bush Administration opted to propose the long-awaited "second resolution" authorizing war.<sup>254</sup> Although the resolution was ultimately withdrawn on March 17, 2003, without a vote – even though President Bush had assured all concerned that there would be a vote "no matter what the whip count is"<sup>255</sup> – the Bush Administration's desperate tactics to obtain passage, even to the



point of wiretapping the communications of Security Council Members, belie the true purpose of the United Nations route.

For example, the Bush Administration engaged in a secret “dirty tricks” campaign against UN Security Council delegations as part of its struggle to win votes in favor of the requisite second resolution. A memorandum written by a top official at the U.S. National Security Agency details an aggressive surveillance operation that involved the interception of home and office telephone calls and e-mails and was particularly directed at “UN Security Council Members (minus US and GBR, of course).”<sup>256</sup> The memo was directed at senior NSA officials and advises them that the agency is “mounting a surge” aimed at gleaning information not only on how delegations on the Security Council will vote on any second resolution on Iraq, but also “policies,” “negotiating positions,” “alliances” and “dependencies” – the “whole gamut of information that could give US policymakers an edge in obtaining results favorable to US goals or to head off surprises.”<sup>257</sup>

The existence of this surveillance operation severely undercut the credibility and efforts of the Administration to win over undecided delegations. In addition, diplomats complained about the outright “hostility” of U.S. tactics to persuade them to fall in line, including threats such as receiving the “unpleasant economic consequences of standing up to the US.”<sup>258</sup>

Further proof that the Bush Administration used the United Nations as a pretext for war can be seen in the fact that by March, after it was clear the votes did not exist for a second resolution, the Administration engaged in furious and frantic efforts to develop the legal cover to justify military action.<sup>259</sup> Thus, the Bush Administration began to argue that the invasion would be pursuant to a Security Council Resolution.<sup>260</sup> In a speech immediately preceding the invasion, President Bush cited to three previous UN Security Council resolutions that purportedly conferred legal authorization for force. These were: (1) the recent Resolution 1441, which dealt with the renewed weapons inspections; (2) Resolution 678, adopted in 1990, authorizing force in the Persian Gulf war; and (3) Resolution 687, adopted shortly after the war ended, imposing economic sanctions and calling for the surrender for WMD.<sup>261</sup>

The Bush administration’s legal justifications for changing course and action without a second resolution also lack credibility. With respect to Resolution 1441, the clear weight of authority signaled that it did not in itself authorize force and that the Administration would need a second resolution from the Security Council. In fact, the U.K. Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith, expressed this view to Prime Minister Blair days before the invasion of Iraq.<sup>262</sup> With respect to a violation of Resolution 687, which would trigger the use of force contemplated in 678, the British authorities cited in the March 2002 Legal Background Paper included in the Downing Street Minutes note that the United States is the only country in the world that was claiming that an explicit authorization from the U.N. to enforce U.N. resolutions by invading Iraq was not needed: “As the cease-fire was proclaimed by the Council in 687 (1991), it is for the Council to assess whether any such breach of those obligations has occurred . .

.[t]he US have a rather different view: they maintain that the assessment of breach is for individual member States. We are not aware of any other State which supports this view.”<sup>263</sup>

Even Richard Perle, a noted war hawk, acknowledged that legal precedent did not support the unilateral action taken by the Bush and Blair Administration. Before an audience in London, he admitted that “international law . . . would have required us to leave Saddam Hussein alone.”<sup>264</sup>

While the Bush Administration was forced to make these far fetched legal arguments, British legal authorities found themselves in the position of having to completely reverse their initial assessments of the illegality of the war. Thus, although as recently as Spring 2002, it was clear British legal advisors understood that applicable international law did not justify military action,<sup>265</sup> less than one year later, British authorities were altering their legal analysis and conclusions. For example, on March 17, 2003, the British Attorney General produced a memo that provided an unequivocal justification for the use of force, which contained no caveats or reservations. His new view, which still remains contentious in Britain, was that authority to use force existed from the “combined effects” of UN Security Council Resolutions.<sup>266</sup>

This abrupt about face led to a legal storm in the United Kingdom and a wave of resignations.<sup>267</sup> As Ray McGovern testified at a hearing on the Downing Street Minutes, the British documents on this point “show a panic, a veritable panic among British lawyers, and I think perhaps you can all identify with this. They were befuddled. The decision had been made for war. Their prime minister had opted on to this scheme and they were trying to figure out a way how it could be legally justified.”<sup>268</sup>

One casualty, Elizabeth Wimshurst, Deputy Legal Adviser at the British Foreign Office, stated in her letter of resignation in protest of the war that the invasion of Iraq is a “crime of aggression.”<sup>269</sup> She said she could not agree to military action in circumstances she described as “so detrimental to the international order and the rule of law.”<sup>270</sup> She also noted:

I regret that I cannot agree that it is lawful to use force against Iraq without a second Security Council resolution to revive the authorization given in SCR 678. I do not need to set out my reasoning; you are aware of it. My views accord with the advice that has been given consistently in this office before and after the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1441 and with what the attorney general gave us to understand was his view prior to his letter of 7 March. (The view expressed in that letter has of course changed again into what is now the official line.).<sup>271</sup>

## 2. Misstating and Manipulating the Intelligence to Justify Pre-emptive War

*"There was a great deal of pressure to find a reason to go to war with Iraq. And the pressure was not just subtle; it was blatant . . . [the official's boss] called a meeting and gave them their marching orders. And he said, "You know what? If Bush wants to go to war, it's your job to give him a reason to do so."*

-----Fall/Winter, 2001, a CIA official working on WMD<sup>272</sup>

Our investigation reveals that there was a steady stream of pressure and other forms of influence placed on intelligence and other government officials by the Bush Administration to adopt assessments supporting war with Iraq. In particular, we found that members of the Bush Administration misstated, overstated and manipulated intelligence with regard to linkages between Iraq and Al Qaeda; the acquisition of nuclear weapons by Iraq; the acquisition of aluminum tubes to be used as uranium centrifuges; and the acquisition of uranium from Niger. In this section, we will generally detail the techniques utilized by the Administration to manipulate intelligence, as well as identify several specific examples of such manipulation.

As a general matter, the record reveals that the Bush Administration engaged in several techniques to insure that the available intelligence information would be used to justify war – including the application of political pressure on intelligence officials, "stovepiping" (whereby raw and unfiltered data was forwarded directly to the White House); "cherry-picking" (by which the White House only utilized those bits of data and information, often without qualification or caveat, that supported a case for war); and selectively leaking information (including classified information) to the media.<sup>273</sup>

We know about these techniques from numerous and repeated disclosures by current and former intelligence and Administration officials. Perhaps most damaging are the candid assessments by life-long Republican and former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and Secretary of State Powell's former Chief of Staff, Lawrence Wilkerson. Mr. O'Neill recounted, "If you operate in a certain way - by saying this is how I want to justify what I've already decided to do, and I don't care how you pull it off - you guarantee that you'll get faulty, one-sided information . . . [y]ou don't have to issue an edict, or twist arms, or be overt."<sup>274</sup> Lawrence Wilkerson recently stated:

The case that I saw for four-plus years was a case I have never seen in my studies of aberrations, bastardizations, perturbations, changes to the national security decision-making process, . . . **What I saw was a cabal between the vice president of the United States, Richard Cheney, and the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, on critical issues that made decisions that the bureaucracy did not know were being made . . . [when a decision was presented to the bureaucracy], it was presented in such a disjointed, incredible way that the bureaucracy often didn't know what it was doing as it moved to carry them out.**<sup>275</sup>

With regard to outright pressure, a former CIA analyst described the intense pressure brought to bear on CIA analysts by the Bush Administration: "The analysts at the C.I.A. were beaten down defending their assessments. And they blame George Tenet" — the CIA director — "for not protecting them. I've never seen a government like this."<sup>276</sup>

In a similar vein, *The Washington Post* described the pressure on intelligence officials from a barrage of high-ranking Bush Administration officials:

Former and current intelligence officials said they felt a continual drumbeat, not only from Cheney and Libby, but also from Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz, Feith, and less so from CIA Director George J. Tenet, to find information or write reports in a way that would help the administration make the case that going into Iraq was urgent. **"They were the browbeaters," said a former defense intelligence official who attended some of the meetings in which Wolfowitz and others pressed for a different approach to the assessments they were receiving. "In interagency meetings," he said, "Wolfowitz treated the analysts' work with contempt."**<sup>277</sup>

There are numerous other instances and corroboration of this pressure. For example, on October 8, 2002, *Knight Ridder* reported that various military officials, intelligence employees, and diplomats in the Bush Administration charged "that the administration squelches dissenting views and that intelligence analysts are under intense pressure to produce reports supporting the White House's argument that Hussein poses such an immediate threat to the United States that preemptive military action is necessary."<sup>278</sup> It has also been reported that the Vice President's staff monitored the National Security Council staff in such a heavy-handed fashion that some N.S.C. staff "quit using e-mails for substantive conversations because they knew the vice president's alternate national security staff was reading their e-mails now."<sup>279</sup> United States Diplomat John Brady Kiesling resigned his post as a diplomat because of the flaws in the intelligence process. In his resignation letter, he cited his opposition to the "distortion of intelligence, such systematic manipulation of American opinion."<sup>280</sup>

A CIA official working on WMD explained: **"[T]here was a great deal of pressure to find a reason to go to war with Iraq.' And the pressure was not just subtle; it was blatant.** At one point in January 2003, the person's boss called a meeting and gave them their marching orders. "And he said, 'You know what-if Bush wants to go to war, it's your job to give him a reason to do so' . . . He said it at the weekly office meeting. And I just remember saying, 'This is something that the American public, if they ever knew, would be outraged' . . . He said it to about fifty people. And it's funny because everyone still talks about that - 'Remember when [he] said that.'"<sup>281</sup>

With regard to stovepiping and cherry-picking, a former intelligence aid stated: "There's so much intelligence out there that it's easy to pick and choose your case . .

. [i]t opens things up to cherry-picking.”<sup>282</sup> Former CIA officer Robert Baer concluded on the CNN documentary *Dead Wrong*, that “the problem is the White House didn’t go to the CIA and say ‘tell me the truth,’ it said ‘give me ammunition.”<sup>283</sup> As Spencer Ackerman and John Judis found in their article “The First Casualty,” “interviews with current and former intelligence officials and other experts reveal that the Bush administration culled from U.S. intelligence those assessments that supported its position and omitted those that did not. The administration ignored, and even suppressed, disagreement within the intelligence agencies and pressured the CIA to reaffirm its preferred version of the Iraqi threat.”<sup>284</sup>

Seymour Hersh similarly found that: “Chalabi’s defector reports were now flowing from the Pentagon directly to the Vice-President’s office, and then on to the President, with little prior evaluation by intelligence professionals.”<sup>285</sup>

Former National Security Council official, Ken Pollack, confirmed how the Bush Administration abused the intelligence process in order to justify invading Iraq, observing the Bush team had “dismantle[d] the existing filtering process that for fifty years had been preventing the policymakers from getting bad information. They created stovepipes to get the information they wanted directly to the top leadership. Their position is that the professional bureaucracy is deliberately and maliciously keeping information from them. They always had information to back up their public claims, but it was often very bad information.”<sup>286</sup>

Similar, damaging acknowledgments of intelligence manipulations have been made by ex-CIA officials. Vincent Cannistraro, the CIA’s former head of counter-intelligence admitted, “Basically, cooked information is working its way into high-level pronouncements and there’s a lot of unhappiness about it in intelligence, especially among analysts at the CIA.”<sup>287</sup> Michael Scheuer, a CIA analyst, echoed this when he stated, “[t]here was just a resignation within the agency that we were going to war against Iraq and it didn’t make any difference what the analysis was or what kind of objections or countervailing forces there were to an invasion. We were going to war.”<sup>288</sup>

In an interview on the PBS show *Frontline*, Greg Thielmann, Director of the Strategic, Proliferation and Military Affairs Office at the State Department’s Intelligence Bureau, who was responsible for analyzing the Iraq’s weapon threat, accused the White House of “systematic, across-the-board exaggeration” of intelligence as it made its case that Saddam Hussein posed an imminent threat to the U.S.<sup>289</sup> He further contended that “senior officials made statements which I can only describe as dishonest.”<sup>290</sup> Mr. Thielmann has also stated that “the American public was seriously misled. The Administration twisted, distorted, and simplified intelligence in a way that led Americans to seriously misunderstand the nature of the Iraq threat. I’m not sure I can think of a worse act against the people in a democracy than a president distorting critical classified information.”<sup>291</sup>

It also appears that the Bush Administration engaged in an organized effort to selectively leak information to the media in order to help justify the case for war. As *Knight Ridder* reported:

*A Knight Ridder review of the administration's arguments, its own reporting at the time and the Senate Intelligence Committee's 2004 report shows that the White House followed a pattern of using questionable intelligence, even documents that turned out to be forgeries, to support its case – often leaking classified information to receptive journalists – and dismissing information that undermined the case for war.*<sup>292</sup>

This process of selective leaking appears to have had a particularly debilitating impact on the intelligence community:

*A routine settled in: the Pentagon's defector reports, classified "secret," would be funneled to newspapers, but subsequent C.I.A. and INR analyses of the reports – invariably scathing but also classified – would remain secret. "It became a personality issue," a Pentagon consultant said of the Bush Administration's handling of intelligence. "My fact is better than your fact. The whole thing is a failure of process. Nobody goes to primary sources." The intelligence community was in full retreat.*<sup>293</sup>

Some of the above-described techniques can be seen in two instances – the visits by the Vice President and Scooter Libby to CIA headquarters; and efforts by the Vice President and his office to influence and manipulate Secretary of State Powell's February, 2003 speech before the United Nations.

It is now well known that the Vice President himself, along with his Chief of Staff, Scooter Libby, made numerous visits to CIA Headquarters in Virginia, during which they placed even greater pressure on individual analysts to develop conclusions supporting a decision to go to war. Numerous media outlets confirmed that these visits occurred, with *The Washington Post* reporting as follows:

Vice President Cheney and his most senior aide made multiple trips to the CIA over the past year to question analysts studying Iraq's weapons programs and alleged links to al Qaeda, creating an environment in which some analysts felt they were being pressured to make their assessments fit with the Bush administration's policy objectives, according to senior intelligence officials. With Cheney taking the lead in the administration last August in advocating military action against Iraq by claiming it had weapons of mass destruction, the visits by the Vice President and his chief of staff, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, 'sent signals . . . that a certain output was desired from here,' one senior agency official said yesterday . . . . The exact number of trips by Cheney to the CIA could not be learned, but one agency official described them as "multiple." They were taken in addition to Cheney's regular attendance at President Bush's morning intelligence briefings and the special briefings the



vice president receives when he is at an undisclosed location for security reasons.<sup>294</sup>

Some analysts went even further in detailing the pressure placed on them by the Vice President's visits. According to former CIA officials, the visits created a "chill factor" among those working on Iraq. There was "a kind of radical pressure" throughout 2002 and on into 2003, one former official said.<sup>295</sup> At a hearing convened by Representative Conyers, former CIA analyst Ray McGovern testified: "But I had never known fixing to include the Vice President abrogating the right to turn a key piece of intelligence on its head. Nor had I in all those years ever known a sitting Vice President to make multiple visits to CIA headquarters to make sure the fix was in, and this is just one example."<sup>296</sup>

The record also shows that the Bush Administration gave the Secretary of State significant amounts of biased and one-sided intelligence information and then pressured the Secretary to skew his presentation to the United Nations. Lawrence Wilkerson, Colin Powell's Chief of Staff at the time of the speech, has stated that when the Secretary of State first received background materials for his speech from the White House: "[Powell] came through the door that morning and he had in his hand a sheaf of papers and he said this is what I've got to present at the United Nations according to the White House and you need to look at it . . . [i]t was anything but an intelligence document. It was, as some people characterized it later, sort of a Chinese menu from which you could pick and choose."<sup>297</sup> Powell himself junked much of what the CIA had given him to read, reportedly calling it "bull\*\*\*\*."<sup>298</sup>

This was followed by numerous meetings in which the Vice President's office sought to pressure Mr. Powell to make the case for war:

The meetings [between the Vice President's staff and the Secretary of State's staff] stretched on for four more days and nights. Cheney's staff constantly pushed for certain intelligence on Iraq's alleged ties to terrorists to be included-information that Powell and his people angrily insisted was not reliable . . . Cheney and his staff had insisted that their intelligence was, in fact, well documented. They told Powell not to worry. One morning a few days before the speech, Powell encountered Cheney in the hall way outside the Oval Office. 'Your poll numbers are in the 70s,' Cheney told him. 'You can afford to lose a few points.'<sup>299</sup>

It also has been reported that Mr. Libby was pushing so hard to include certain intelligence information in the speech that Mr. Libby called Mr. Powell's suite at the Waldorf Astoria hotel the night before the speech. John E. McLaughlin, then-deputy director of the CIA, has testified to Congress that "much of our time in the run-up to the speech was spent taking out material . . . that we and the secretary's staff judged to have been unreliable."<sup>300</sup>

The eventual speech (discussed in greater length in Section III(a)(5) of this Report) “was still based on a hyped and incomplete view of U.S. intelligence on Iraq. Much of what was new in Secretary Powell’s speech was raw data that had come into the CIA’s possession but had not yet undergone serious analysis.”<sup>301</sup> Mr. Powell has admitted that he saw the incident as a “blot” on his reputation.<sup>302</sup> On national television, Secretary Powell stated, “It was painful . . . [i]t’s painful now.”<sup>303</sup>

a. **Links to September 11 and al Qaeda**

*“Wrong answer . . . . Do it Again.”*

-----Fall 2001, Richard Clarke, on *60 Minutes*, describing the reaction of the Bush White House to his report finding no connection between Iraq and the September 11 attacks.<sup>304</sup>

Our investigation has found that members of the Bush Administration made numerous false statements alleging links between Iraq and al Qaeda and terrorism. Not only were those statements false, but they appear to have been accompanied by deliberate efforts to pressure and manipulate intelligence. We know this from revelations in the Downing Street Minutes, statements by current and ex-Bush Administration officials, and publicly released reports and other disclosures.

Numerous members of the Bush Administration, including the President, made false statements linking Saddam Hussein to the events of September 11 and al Qaeda. “You can’t distinguish between al Qaeda and Saddam when you talk about the war on Terror,” President Bush said on September 25, 2002.<sup>305</sup> Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Powell and National Security Advisor Rice all issued misleading statements regarding this linkage as well. For example, in September 19, 2002 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Defense Secretary claimed “We know that al Qaeda is operating in Iraq today, and that little happens in Iraq without the knowledge of the Saddam Hussein regime.”<sup>306</sup> On September 27, 2002, Secretary Rumsfeld claimed that he had “bulletproof” evidence of ties between Saddam and Al- Qaeda.<sup>307</sup> Powell also described a “potentially . . . sinister nexus between Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network, a nexus that combines classic terrorist organizations and modern methods of murder.”<sup>308</sup> And on September 25, 2002, Rice insisted, “There clearly are contacts between Al Qaeda and Iraq . . . There clearly is testimony that some of the contacts have been important contacts and that there’s a relationship there.”<sup>309</sup>

In particular, the Vice President made a number of false statements linking Iraq with the September 11 hijackers. Just a few months after the attacks and over a year prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the Vice President appeared on *Meet the Press* on December 9, 2001 and stated: “Well, what we now have that’s developed since you and I last talked, Tim [Russert], of course, was that report that’s been pretty well confirmed, that [Mohammed Atta, one of the hijackers] . . . did go to Prague and he did meet with a senior official of the Iraqi intelligence service in Czechoslovakia last April, several months before the attack.”<sup>310</sup> Even after the invasion, on October 10,

2003, the Vice President stated that Saddam Hussein “had an established relationship with al-Qaeda.”<sup>311</sup>

In addition, both the President and Secretary of State Powell made false statements claiming that Iraq had trained al Qaeda members to use chemical and biological weapons. In his October 7, 2002 speech in Cincinnati, shortly before the congressional vote to authorize military action, the President stated: “We’ve learned that Iraq has trained al Qaeda members in bomb-making and poisons and deadly gases, . . . We know that Iraq and al Qaeda have had high-level contacts that go back a decade.”<sup>312</sup> In his February 5, 2003 speech before the UN, Secretary of State Powell stated: “I can trace the story of a senior terrorist operative telling how Iraq provided training in these weapons to Al-Qaeda.”<sup>313</sup> Powell also said that “[w]e are not surprised that Iraq is harboring Zarqawi and his subordinates. This understanding builds on decades-long experience with respect to ties between Iraq and al-Qaida.”<sup>314</sup> In 2002, *Newsweek* disclosed that information about links between Iraq and al Qaeda came from Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi, an aide to Osama bin Laden in US custody.<sup>315</sup>

We now know that these statements were false. With respect to general linkages between Iraq and al Qaeda, on June 16, 2004, the 9-11 Commission concluded that it had found no “collaborative” relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda.<sup>316</sup> The 9-11 Commission further concluded that “[w]e have no credible evidence that Iraq and al Qaeda cooperated on attacks against the United States.”<sup>317</sup> The Senate Select Committee’s Report on Pre-War Intelligence confirmed CIA assessments that “there was no evidence proving Iraqi complicity or assistance in an al-Qaida attack” and that contacts between the two “did not add up to an established formal relationship.”<sup>318</sup> On January 28, 2004, David Kay testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that there is no evidence of participation by either Saddam Hussein or his principal henchmen in the WMD-sharing with al Qaeda or any other terrorist organizations.<sup>319</sup> With respect to the Vice President’s allegations of meetings between Mohammed Atta and Iraqi intelligence, the 9-11 Commission concluded: “We do not believe that such a meeting occurred.” The Commission cited FBI photographic and telephone evidence, Czech and U.S. investigations, and reports from detainees, including the Iraqi official with whom Atta was alleged to have met.<sup>320</sup>

As for the allegations that Iraq had trained members of al Qaeda to make bombs with poisons and deadly gases, and that they had high level contacts going back a decade, these statements were based on information provided by a top al Qaeda operative, Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi. However, Mr. al-Libi, who was captured in Pakistan at the end of 2001, recanted his claims in January 2004. In response, a month later the CIA recalled all intelligence reports based on his statements, a fact recorded in a footnote to the report issued by the 9-11 Commission.<sup>321</sup>

Numerous public reports and information, as well as statements by current and former Bush Administration officials, indicate that the Bush Administration must have known that these misstatements were not fully supported at the time they were

made, and that members of the Bush Administration had exercised political pressure so that intelligence information would support their desired conclusions.

i. General Linkages Between Iraq and al Qaeda

With regard to general assertions linking Iraq with al Qaeda and terrorism, we now know that intelligence experts within the Administration questioned this linkage prior to the Iraq invasion. As detailed by Richard Clarke, former National Coordinator for Counterterrorism for the National Security Council, the President requested a report on whether Iraq was behind the September 11 attacks. Clark describes: **"we got together all the F.B.I. experts, all the C.I.A. experts. We wrote the report. We sent the report out to C.I.A. and found F.B.I. and said, 'Will you sign this report?' They all cleared the report. And we sent it up to the President and it got bounced back by the National Security Advisor or Deputy. It got bounced and sent back saying, 'Wrong answer . . . Do it again.'"**<sup>322</sup>

It was also recently disclosed that as early as September 21, 2001, the President knew there was no evidence tying Iraq and al Qaeda. **"Ten days after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, President Bush was told in a highly classified briefing that the U.S. intelligence community had no evidence linking the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein to the attacks and that there was scant credible evidence that Iraq had any significant collaborative ties with al Qaeda, according to government records and current and former officials with firsthand knowledge of the matter."**<sup>323</sup> This briefing, which was confirmed by a former high-level official, was also distributed to Vice President Cheney, the President's national security adviser and deputy national security adviser, the secretaries and undersecretaries of State and Defense, and various other senior policy makers.<sup>324</sup> The official said, "What the President was told on September 21 was consistent with everything he has been told since – that the evidence was just not there."<sup>325</sup> It is significant that this critical briefing came before the various misstatements of Mr. Bush and other high Administration officials linking Iraq with al Qaeda.

Moreover, a June 21, 2002 CIA report titled, "Iraq and Al Qaeda: Interpreting a Murky Relationship," stated "[o]ur knowledge of Iraqi links to Al Qaeda still contains many critical gaps" and "[s]ome analysts concur with the assessment that intelligence reporting provides 'no conclusive evidence of cooperation on specific terrorist operations.'"<sup>326</sup>

In addition, an October 2002 NIE included key judgments regarding Saddam Hussein's link to al Qaeda. In its section on "Confidence Levels for Selected Key Judgements in This Estimate," the NIE gave a **"Low Confidence"** rating to the notion of **"[w]hether in desperation Saddam would share chemical or biological weapons with Al Qa'ida."**<sup>327</sup> The NIE also reported that "Baghdad for now appears to be drawing a line short of conducting terrorist attacks with conventional or CBW against

the United States, fearing that exposure of Iraqi involvement would provide Washington a stronger cause for making war."

In January of 2003, the CIA issued an updated and revised version of "Iraq Support for Terrorism," initially circulated in September 2002. The paper stated, "[t]he Intelligence Community has no credible information that Baghdad had foreknowledge of the 11 September attacks or any other al-Qaida strike."<sup>328</sup> Specifically, the paper clearly forewarned in its "Scope Note" section that "[t]his paper's conclusions-especially regarding the difficult and elusive question of the exact nature of Iraq's relations with al-Qaida-are based on currently available information that is at times contradictory and derived from sources with varying degrees of reliability."<sup>329</sup>

Michael Scheuer, a CIA analyst, described a comprehensive CIA examination of the possible linkage, which was totally disregarded by the White House. Scheuer told CNN, "Mr. Tenet, to his credit, had us go back through CIA files and we went back for almost ten years, reviewed nearly 20,000 documents, which came to 65,000 pages or more and could find no connection in the terms of a state sponsored relationship with Iraq. I believe Mr. Tenet took it downtown, but it apparently didn't have any impact."<sup>330</sup> Another former CIA agent Bob Baer also confirmed, "But there is no evidence that a strategic partnership came out of it. I'm unaware of any evidence of Saddam pursuing terrorism against the U.S."<sup>331</sup>

Finally, former senior State Department intelligence official Greg Thielmann has stated, "There was no significant pattern of cooperation between Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist operation . . . [i]ntelligence agencies agreed on the 'lack of a meaningful connection to al Qaeda' and said so to the White House and Congress."<sup>332</sup>

There is also significant evidence that members of the Bush Administration not only knowingly made false statements regarding linkages between al Qaeda and Iraq, they also pressured intelligence officials to do the same, and on at least one occasion, caused classified information to be leaked that would help support its case.

Government reports as well as numerous admissions by Bush Administration officials and CIA personnel, confirm the extraordinary effort by the Administration to link Saddam Hussein with the September 11 attacks. In an important report in which a classified internal review of the CIA's pre-war intelligence was conducted, former Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, Richard Kerr stated publicly that:

There was a lot of pressure, no question . . . [t]he White House, State, Defense, were raising questions, heavily on W.M.D. and the issue of terrorism . . . some of the analysts felt there was pressure . . . some people in the agency will say, 'We've been pushed too hard.' Analysts will say, 'You're trying to politicize it.' There were people who felt there was too much pressure . . . they were being asked again and again to re-state their judgments-do another paper on this, repetitive pressures. Do it again.<sup>333</sup>

Kerr's conclusions were confirmed by a similar investigation conducted by the CIA Ombudsman, who told the Senate Intelligence Committee that the **"hammering" by the Bush Administration on Iraq intelligence was harder than he had previously witnessed in his 32-year career with the agency.**<sup>334</sup> A senior analyst at the Defense Intelligence Agency also testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee that he was aware of pressure being put on analysts.<sup>335</sup>

Another former official with the Bush National Security Counsel acknowledged, **"It was a classic case of rumint, rumor-intelligence plugged into various speeches and accepted as gospel."**<sup>336</sup> An official with the CIA told *The New York Times* directly that the Administration was using intelligence information in any manner to link Saddam Hussein with al Qaeda. "I remember reading the Abu Zubaydah [a top Al-Qaeda leader] debriefing last year, while the administration was talking about all of these other reports [of a Saddam-al Qaeda link], and thinking that they were only putting out what they wanted."<sup>337</sup>

FBI employees have also described the Bush Administration's willingness to manipulate intelligence linking Iraq and al Qaeda. *ABC News* reported:

At the Federal Bureau of Investigation, some investigators said they were baffled by the Bush administration's insistence on a solid link between Iraq and Osama bin Laden's network. "We've been looking at this hard for more than a year and you know what, we just don't think it's there," a government official said . . . Mr. Bush asserted in his State of the Union address this week that Iraq was protecting and aiding Qaeda operatives, but American intelligence and law enforcement officials said the evidence was fragmentary and inconclusive . . . **"It's more than just skepticism," said one official, describing the feelings of some analysts in the intelligence agencies. "I think there is also a sense of disappointment with the community's leadership that they are not standing up for them at a time when intelligence is obviously politicized . . . Based on the terrorism experts I met during my period of government, I never heard anyone make the claim that there was a significant tie between Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein." He added, "The Bush administration . . . was misleading the public in implying there was a close connection."**<sup>338</sup>

Another source familiar with the September 11 investigation admitted: "The FBI has been pounded on to make this link."<sup>339</sup>

The attempted linkages were so attenuated that the Director of the CIA had to correct Bush Administration misstatements on numerous occasions. George Tenet testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that in at least three instances, he had to correct President Bush and Vice President Cheney for making misrepresentations of intelligence in their public speeches.<sup>340</sup> Tenet said he also was forced to correct Vice President Cheney for having referred to Douglas Feith's



disputed memo about Iraq's connection to al Qaeda as "your best source of information."<sup>341</sup>

There is significant evidence that the Pentagon's newly created Counter Terrorism Evaluation Group (CTEG)<sup>342</sup> under Douglas Feith – which is currently under investigation for wrongdoing<sup>343</sup> – was used to place undue pressure on both the State Department and the CIA linking Iraq with al Qaeda, to cherry-pick and stovepipe such information directly to the White House, and to leak classified information regarding this linkage to the press. A *New York Times* article concluded that "for Iraq's links to al-Qaeda, Powell's staff was convinced that much of that material had been funneled directly to Cheney by a tiny, separate intelligence unit set up by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. We were so appalled at what had arrived from the White House, says one official."<sup>344</sup>

Mel Goodman, a CIA analyst for 24 years - also detailed the political pressure brought to bear on career intelligence officials: "[Vice President Cheney] was holding forth on what he thought the situation was and why doesn't your intelligence support what we know is out there? They assumed he was referring to [Feith's] Pentagon intelligence unit that was producing stuff that was going right downtown and had much stronger claims about links between Saddam and al-Qaeda."<sup>345</sup>

This pressure appears to have seeped all the way down to Iraqi exiles, as they were apparently advised to tailor their information to show links to terror and WMD by Iraq:

The Iraq National Congress (INC), an exile group based in London, led by Ahmad Chalabi had been supplying U.S. Intelligence with Iraqi defectors whose information had often proved suspect or fabricated. The problem with the INC was that its information came with an overt agenda. As the INC's Washington adviser, Francis Brooke, admitted, he urged the exile group to do what it could to make the case for war: "I told them, as their campaign manager, 'Go get me a terrorist and some W.M.D., because that's what the Bush administration is interested in.'"<sup>346</sup>

It was also clear to British intelligence and diplomatic personnel that the Bush Administration was pushing and manipulating intelligence to link September 11 to Saddam Hussein. For example, in the March 22, 2002 Ricketts Memo, part of the Downing Street Minutes documents, Peter Ricketts, the Political Director of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, advised the Prime Minister on his April 2002 trip to Crawford: "US scrambling to establish a link between Iraq and Al-Aaida[sic] is so far frankly unconvincing" and "For Iraq, 'regime change' does not stack up. It sounds like a grudge between Bush and Saddam."<sup>347</sup> The Downing Street Minutes also include the following admission by the UK Overseas and Defense Secretariat in the March 8, 2002 Options Paper: "In the judgement of the JIC [British Joint Intelligence Committee] there is no recent evidence of Iraq complicity with international terrorism. There is

therefore no justification for action against Iraq based on action in self-defence (Article 51) to combat imminent threats of terrorism as in Afghanistan.”<sup>348</sup>

## ii. Meeting Between Mohammed Atta and Iraqi Officials

With respect to the alleged meeting between Mohammed Atta and a senior Iraqi official in Prague, the Vice President's assertions omitted key information. The Vice President failed to acknowledge that, by late April 2002, the CIA and FBI had concluded that (1) “the meeting probably did not take place”;<sup>349</sup> (2) Czech government officials had developed doubts about whether this meeting occurred; and (3) American records indicated that Mr. Atta was in Virginia Beach, Virginia, at the time of the purported meeting.<sup>350</sup>

Administration officials also described the same type of pressure and manipulation concerning the alleged meeting between Mohammed Atta and Iraqi Intelligence. *The Washington Post* described an ongoing tug-of-war between the Vice-President's office and the CIA:

The feud had been simmering in the run-up to the Iraq war. Cheney's office kept pushing the CIA to substantiate claims by Chalabi and other defectors that would connect Iraq to al Qaeda and the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. The vice president's office focused on a meeting that had allegedly taken place in Prague in April 2001 between Sept. 11 hijacker Mohamed Atta and Iraqi intelligence. CIA analysts would literally measure ears and noses in surveillance photos of the alleged meeting to show that the report was phony, but Cheney's aides would tell them to go back again, and yet again. In January 2003, the CIA finally balked at being assigned over and over to confirm what it viewed as phony intelligence. In a heated conversation with Libby, CIA Deputy Director John McLaughlin is said to have insisted: “I'm not going back to the well on this. We've done our work.”<sup>351</sup>

## iii. Iraq Training al Qaeda Members to Use Chemical and Biological Weapons

We now know that the information provided by the prisoner Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi – that Iraqis had trained Al Qaeda members to use chemical and biological weapons – was false and that the Bush Administration knew his information was not credible. This is because of the recent declassification of a key Defense Intelligence Agency document by Senator Carl Levin:

A high al Qaeda official in American custody was identified as a likely fabricator months before the Bush administration began to use his statements as the foundation for its claims that Iraq trained al Qaeda members to use biological and chemical weapons. The document, an intelligence report from February 2002, said it was probable that the prisoner, Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi, “was intentionally misleading the debriefers” in making claims about Iraqi support for Al Qaeda's work with illicit weapons. . . the D.I.A. report noted

that Mr. Libi's claims lacked specific details about the Iraqis involved, the illicit weapons used and the location where the training was to have taken place. "It is possible he does not know any further details; it is more likely this individual is intentionally misleading the debriefers," the February 2002 report said. "Ibn al-Shaykh has been undergoing debriefs for several weeks and may be describing scenarios to the debriefers that he knows will retain their interest."<sup>352</sup>

There appears to be little doubt that key Administration officials knew of this important disclosure, because as an official intelligence report, labeled DITSUM No. 044-02, it would have circulated widely within the government and would have been available to the CIA, the White House, the Pentagon and other agencies.<sup>353</sup> Nor could Secretary of State Powell have responsibly relied on al-Libi's information given that a classified CIA assessment at the time stated that "the source [al-Libi] was not in a position to know if any training had taken place."<sup>354</sup> According to *The New York Times*, the misinformation came from a detainee "identified as a likely fabricator" months before the Bush Administration began to use his statements as the foundation for its claims that Iraq trained al Qaeda members to use biological and chemical weapons.<sup>355</sup>

The declassified DIA document also reveals that the President's and Secretary of State Powell's claims of a "decade" long relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda were completely inappropriate given that the DIA's declassified February 2002 report points out that "Saddam's regime is intensely secular and wary of Islamic revolutionary movements."<sup>356</sup> Moreover, Baghdad is unlikely to provide assistance to a group it cannot control."<sup>357</sup>

FBI anti-terrorism expert, Dan Coleman, observed that "[i]t was ridiculous for interrogators to think Libi would have known anything about Iraq."<sup>358</sup> He went on to say: "I could have told them that. He ran a training camp. He wouldn't have had anything to do with Iraq. Administration officials were always pushing us to come up with links, but there weren't any."<sup>359</sup>

Another reason to question the credibility of the Bush Administration's statements relying on al-Libi's disclosure is that the Administration knew that his information flowed directly from a harsh interrogation. Current and former government officials have recently admitted that al-Libi stated that he had fabricated his statements to escape harsh treatment. The officials noted that al-Libi provided his most specific and elaborate accounts about ties between Iraq and al Qaeda only after he was secretly handed over to Egypt by the United States in January 2002, in a process known as rendition.<sup>360</sup>

#### **b. Resumed Efforts to Acquire Nuclear Weapons**

*"We still knew enough, [and] we could watch pretty closely what was happening."*

-----According to one CIA analyst describing events in 2002, US intelligence showed precious little evidence to indicate a resumption of Iraq's nuclear program, as Tenet's early 2002 threat assessments had indicated.<sup>361</sup>

Numerous members of the Bush Administration made a variety of claims to the effect that Iraq had and was attempting to acquire nuclear weapons. Most notably, Vice President Dick Cheney stated on *Meet the Press* on March 16, 2003, shortly before the war, that "we know [Saddam] has been absolutely devoted to trying to acquire nuclear weapons. And we believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons."<sup>362</sup> This was not the first time Mr. Cheney made these claims. On August 26, 2002, Mr. Cheney said, "[w]e now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons."<sup>363</sup> Mr. Cheney went on to say that "[a]mong other sources, we've gotten this from firsthand testimony from defectors, including Saddam's own son-in-law."<sup>364</sup>

In addition, in his October 7, 2002, speech in Cincinnati, on the eve of congressional votes on the Iraq war resolution, the President stated, "America must not ignore the threat gathering against us. Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof -- the smoking gun -- that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud."<sup>365</sup> At a September 7, 2002 meeting at Camp David with Prime Minister Blair, President Bush declared that a new "report came out of the . . . IAEA, that they [Iraqis] were six months away from developing a weapon. I don't know what more evidence we need."<sup>366</sup> In his February 2003 presentation before the UN, when considering whether Iraq had reconstituted a nuclear program, Secretary Powell unequivocally stated, "there is no doubt in my mind."<sup>367</sup> Similar statements were made by National Security Director Rice,<sup>368</sup> Secretary Rumsfeld,<sup>369</sup> and Vice President Cheney.<sup>370</sup>

These statements were all false and misleading. On October 2, 2003, David Kay reported that "we have not uncovered evidence that Iraq undertook significant post-1998 steps to actually build nuclear weapons or produce fissile material."<sup>371</sup> In his January 28, 2004, testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Dr. Kay reported that "[a]s best as has been determined . . . in 2000 they had decided that their nuclear establishment had deteriorated to such point that it was totally useless."<sup>372</sup> He concluded that there was "no doubt at all" that Iraq had less of an ability to produce fissile material in 2001 than in 1991.<sup>373</sup> The July 7, 2004 report of the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded that "the judgment in the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), that Iraq was reconstituting its nuclear program, was not supported by the intelligence. The Committee agrees with the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) alternative view that the available intelligence "does not add up to a compelling case for reconstitution."<sup>374</sup>

#### i. General Assertions

Beyond making false and misleading statements about Iraq's attempt to acquire nuclear weapons, the record shows that the Bush Administration must have known that these statements conflicted with known international and domestic intelligence at the time. As early as 2000, the intelligence community recognized that Iraq was not a nuclear threat to the United States. For example, the IAEA reported in 1999 that there was "no indication that Iraq possesses nuclear weapons or any meaningful amounts of weapon-usable nuclear material, or that Iraq has retained any practical capability (facilities or hardware) for the production of such material."<sup>375</sup> Again, in March 2003, IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei reported to the U.N. Security Council that weapons inspectors had not found any evidence that Iraq was "reconstituting its nuclear program."<sup>376</sup>

At the same time, British Intelligence also had not identified any nuclear threat emanating from Iraq. For example, *Newsweek* found that two high ranking British Officials confirmed that by 2002, Iraq's nuclear weapons program was "effectively frozen" and there was "no recent evidence" tying Iraq to international terrorism, notwithstanding the Administration's claims to the contrary.<sup>377</sup>

United States intelligence information on this point was no stronger. For example, the pre-2002 CIA assessments of nuclear proliferation worldwide did not cite any specific nuclear threat from Iraq.<sup>378</sup> At that time, as detailed in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Report, the intelligence community had come to a general consensus that "Iraq did not appear to have reconstituted its nuclear weapons program."<sup>379</sup>

The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) also did not support a credible case for Iraq reacquiring nuclear weapons. The Bureau found, "[t]he activities we have detected do not, however, add up to a compelling case that Iraq is currently pursuing what INR would consider to be an integrated and comprehensive approach to acquire nuclear weapons."<sup>380</sup> INR also stated that, "[l]acking persuasive evidence that Baghdad has launched a coherent effort to reconstitute its nuclear weapons program, INR is unwilling to speculate that such an effort began soon after the departure of UN inspectors."<sup>381</sup>

The December 2001 NIE clearly stated that Iraq did not have nuclear weapons and was not attempting to obtain them. In fact, the December 2001, unlike the October 2002 NIE, was conclusive on this point and contained no dissents regarding Iraq's nuclear capability.<sup>382</sup>

This lack of hard evidence of a nuclear threat from Iraq appears to have led the Bush Administration to pressure intelligence agencies and sources to find a nuclear link. As John Judis and Spencer Ackerman of *The New Republic* wrote:

within the administration, Tenet and the CIA came under an entirely different kind of pressure: Iraq hawks in the Pentagon and in the vice president's office, reinforced by members of the Pentagon's semi-official Defense Policy Board,

mounted a year-long attempt to pressure the CIA to take a harder line against Iraq . . . on the status of its nuclear program. The intelligence community was . . . pressured to exaggerate Iraq's nuclear program. As Tenet's early 2002 threat assessments had indicated, U.S. intelligence showed precious little evidence to indicate a resumption of Iraq's nuclear program. And, while the absence of U.N. inspections had introduced greater uncertainty into intelligence collection on Iraq, according to one analyst, "We still knew enough, [and] we could watch pretty closely what was happening."<sup>383</sup>

Also, two senior policymakers stated in unauthorized interviews that the Bush Administration greatly overstated the short-term dangers of Iraq's nuclear potential. "I never cared about the 'imminent threat,'" said one of the policymakers with directly relevant responsibilities.<sup>384</sup> "To me, just knowing what it takes to have a nuclear weapons program, he needed a lot of equipment. You can stare at the yellowcake [uranium ore] all you want. You need to convert it to gas and enrich it. That does not constitute an imminent threat, and the people who were saying that, I think, did not fully appreciate the difficulties and effort involved in producing the nuclear material and the physics package."<sup>385</sup>

## ii. Claims Regarding Hussein's Son-in-Law

According to the Vice President, Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, Hussein Kamel al-Majid, had made claims that Iraq had resumed its nuclear weapons program between the time of the Gulf War and Kamel's defection in 1995. The Administration was aware that the Vice President's claims directly conflicted with numerous sources at the time. Kamel's statements were a prime concern of UNSCOM and the IAEA. In agency debriefing notes, Professor Maurizio Zifferero of the IAEA expressed that: "It was of great importance for the IAEA to listen to the Minister's [Kamel's] explanations on the full abandonment of the nuclear weapons programme by Iraq."<sup>386</sup> In a September 4, 1995 report, the IAEA declared that Kamel had in fact admitted that since the Gulf War, Iraq had not resumed its attempts to acquire nuclear weapons:

An IAEA delegation, headed by the leader of the Action Team, went to Baghdad and held a round of talks with the Iraqi authorities, from 17 to 20 August 1995 . . . General Hussein Kamel's statement [of August 22, 1995] was compatible with statements made in the Baghdad talks, that all nuclear weapons related activities had effectively ceased at the onset of the attack on Iraq by the coalition forces.<sup>387</sup>

*The Washington Post* also had reported that known intelligence contradicted any statement made by the Vice President that Kamel was a source of intelligence on Iraq engaging in nuclear weapons activity:

But Saddam Hussein lured Kamel back to Iraq, and he was killed in February 1996, so Kamel could not have sourced what U.S. officials "now know." And Kamel's testimony, after defecting, was the reverse of Cheney's



description. In one of many debriefings by U.S., Jordanian and U.N. officials, Kamel said on Aug. 22, 1995, that Iraq's uranium enrichment programs had not resumed after halting at the start of the Gulf War in 1991. According to notes typed for the record by U.N. arms inspector Nikita Smidovich, Kamel acknowledged efforts to design three different warheads, "but not now, before the Gulf War." The U.S. government possessed no specific information on Iraqi efforts to acquire enriched uranium, according to six people who participated in preparing for the estimate. It knew only that Iraq sought to buy equipment of the sort that years of intelligence reports had said "may be" intended for or "could be" used in uranium enrichment.<sup>388</sup>

In October 2004 *The New York Times* published similar conclusions:

In his Nashville speech, Mr. Cheney had not mentioned the aluminum tubes or any other fresh intelligence when he said, "We now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons." The one specific source he did cite was Hussein Kamel al-Majid, a son-in-law of Mr. Hussein's who defected in 1995 after running Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs. But Mr. Majid told American intelligence officials in 1995 that Iraq's nuclear program had been dismantled. What's more, Mr. Majid could not have had any insight into Mr. Hussein's current nuclear activities: he was assassinated in 1996 on his return to Iraq.<sup>389</sup>

### iii. Statement that Iraq Was Six Months from Obtaining a Nuclear Weapon

With respect to President Bush's September 7, 2002 statement regarding a new IAEA Report stating that Iraq was six months from developing a nuclear weapon, we now know that there was no new IAEA Report. As *The Washington Post* reported, "There was no new IAEA report. . . . Bush cast as present evidence the contents of a report from 1996, updated in 1998 and 1999. In those accounts, the IAEA described the history of an Iraqi nuclear weapons program that arms inspectors had systematically destroyed."<sup>390</sup> Even the Bush Administration's after-the-fact efforts to claim that the President meant to reference United States intelligence, not the IAEA, make little sense. Prime Minister Blair was referring to an IAEA Report at the same press conference and "U.S. intelligence reports had only one scenario for an Iraqi bomb in six months to a year, premised on Iraq's immediate acquisition of enough plutonium or enriched uranium from a foreign source."<sup>391</sup>

#### c. Aluminum Tubes

*"[if Iraq was really trying to make centrifuges out of the aluminum tubes] we should just give them the tubes . . . [you could also] turn your new Yugo into a Cadillac, given enough time and energy and effort"*<sup>392</sup>

-----Energy Department analyst testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee

The Bush Administration also misstated and unjustly overstated intelligence with regard to the charge that Iraq was acquiring aluminum tubes that could only be used as uranium centrifuges.

For example, in September 2002, Vice President Cheney stated that “it is now public that, in fact, he [Saddam] has been seeking to acquire, and we have been able to intercept and prevent him from acquiring through this particular channel, the kinds of [aluminum] tubes that are necessary to build a centrifuge . . . We do know, with absolute certainty, that [Saddam Hussein] is using his procurement system to acquire the equipment he needs in order to enrich uranium to build a nuclear weapon.”<sup>393</sup> Also in September 2002, on an appearance on *Meet the Pres*, Mr. Cheney said he knew “in fact” and “with absolute certainty” that Mr. Hussein was buying equipment to build a nuclear weapon.<sup>394</sup> That same day, then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice told CNN that: “We do know that there have been shipments going into . . . Iraq, for instance, of aluminum tubes that really are only suited to - high quality aluminum tools that are only really suited for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs.”<sup>395</sup> In addition, Secretary of State Powell asserted to the Security Council that the tubes were manufactured to a tolerance “that far exceeds U.S. requirements for comparable rockets.”<sup>396</sup> The uranium centrifuge claim was also made by President Bush.<sup>397</sup>

These statements have proved to be both false and misleading. First, on January 27, 2003, the IAEA concluded that the aluminum tubes “would be consistent with the purpose stated by Iraq and, unless modified, would not be suitable for manufacturing centrifuges.”<sup>398</sup> The Iraq Survey Group also did not find evidence that the tubes were intended for nuclear use. In his January 28, 2004, testimony, Dr. Kay announced: “It is my judgment, based on the evidence that was collected . . . that it's more probable that those tubes were intended for use in a conventional missile program, rather than in a centrifuge program.”<sup>399</sup> In addition, the July 7, 2004 report of the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded that “the information available to the Intelligence Community indicated that these tubes were intended to be used for an Iraqi conventional rocket program and not a nuclear program.”<sup>400</sup>

It is now clear that the Bush Administration was aware that these claims regarding the tubes were not only controversial, but also did not stand up to the clear weight of authority from the U.S. and international intelligence communities. The claims were premised on the views of a single, isolated CIA analyst<sup>401</sup> and were contradicted by an overwhelming number of reviews by other credible weapons experts, including those at the Energy Department, the State Department, the Department of Defense, as well as international and outside experts and agencies.

First, there are numerous reports from the Department of Energy that contain information directly contradicting the Bush Administration's contentions.

For example, the Energy Department, the agency responsible for constructing centrifuges and operating the nation's nuclear weapons facilities, learned that on April 10, 2001, an individual identified as "Joe" at the CIA had told senior members of the Administration that the tubes "have little use other than for a uranium enrichment program."<sup>402</sup> The next day the Department was able to rebut the assertions by identifying a number of reasons why the tubes were not appropriate for centrifuges: **"Simply put, the analysis concluded that the tubes were the wrong size - too narrow, too heavy, too long - to be of much practical use in a centrifuge.** What was more, the analysis reasoned, if the tubes were part of a secret, high-risk venture to build a nuclear bomb, why were the Iraqis haggling over prices with suppliers all around the world? And why weren't they shopping for all the other sensitive equipment needed for centrifuges?"<sup>403</sup>

The next month, the Department of Energy analysts went even further, explaining that while the tubes were not suitable for uranium centrifuges, they could easily be used to construct conventional rockets.<sup>404</sup> Many of these concerns were published on May 9, 2001, in the Energy Department's Daily Intelligence Highlight on Intelink, a Web site for the intelligence community and the White House.<sup>405</sup> Among other things, the Energy Department reported, "Iraq had for years used high-strength aluminum tubes to make combustion chambers for slim rockets fired from launcher pods . . . The tubes now sought by Iraq had precisely the same dimensions - a perfect match."<sup>406</sup>

Additional evidence was developed by the Energy Department in the summer of 2001, after the U.S. government seized a shipment of aluminum tubes in Jordan destined for Iraq.<sup>407</sup> The Energy Department quickly assembled a team of its top nuclear scientists,<sup>408</sup> who analyzed the aluminum tubes and found them to be consistent for use with standard rockets. On Aug. 17, 2001, the team published a comprehensive analysis further elaborating concerns regarding the tubes' suitability for centrifuges:

First, in size and material, the tubes were very different from those Iraq had used in its centrifuge prototypes before the first gulf war. Those models used tubes that were nearly twice as wide and made of exotic materials that performed far better than aluminum. **"Aluminum was a huge step backwards," Dr. Wood recalled. In fact, the team could find no centrifuge machines "deployed in a production environment" that used such narrow tubes. Their walls were three times too thick for "favorable use" in a centrifuge, the team wrote. They were also anodized, meaning they had a special coating to protect them from weather. Anodized tubes, the team pointed out, are "not consistent" with a uranium centrifuge because the coating can produce bad reactions with uranium gas.**"<sup>409</sup>

By the end of 2001, Energy Department experts produced an even more definitive analysis rebutting the contention that the aluminum tubes being procured

by Iraq could be used for the production of nuclear weapons. According to the WMD commission:

[A]nalytsts from CIA's Weapons Intelligence, Non-Proliferation, and Arms Control Center (WINPAC) sought the assistance of the DOE National Laboratories – specifically, Oak Ridge National Laboratory – to test the tubes. The Oak Ridge laboratory concluded that, while it was technically possible to enrich uranium using tubes of the diameter the Iraqis were seeking, it would be suboptimal to do so . . . the tubes Iraq was seeking were so suboptimal for uranium enrichment that it would have taken many thousands of them to produce enough uranium for a weapon--and although Iraq was in fact seeking thousands of tubes, DOE assessed it would have been highly unlikely for a proliferator to choose a route that would require such a large number of machines.<sup>410</sup>

In other words, the analysts had found it would be so difficult, expensive and time consuming for Iraq to use these aluminum tubes for nuclear weapons that the likelihood could be discounted entirely. As one Energy Department analyst told Senate Intelligence Committee investigators, if Iraq really wanted to use these tubes for uranium production, “we should just give them the tubes.”<sup>411</sup> While there may have been some infinitesimal theoretical possibility, it was so remote that an Energy Department analyst later likened it to “turn[ing] your new Yugo into a Cadillac.”<sup>412</sup>

Other agencies within the Administration also found the claim that the aluminum tubes could be credibly used for the production of weapons grade uranium to be lacking, including the State and Defense Departments.<sup>413</sup> In the NIE, the State Department explained: “The very large quantities being sought, the way the tubes were tested by the Iraqis, and the atypical lack of attention to operational security in the procurement efforts are among the factors, in addition to the DOE assessment, that lead INR to conclude that the tubes are not intended for use in Iraq’s nuclear weapons program.”<sup>414</sup> The NIE went on to conclude, “INR considers it far more likely that the tubes are intended for another purpose, most likely the production of artillery rockets.”<sup>415</sup>

It has also been reported that shortly before Secretary Powell’s UN presentation on this matter, the State Department explicitly warned him not to assert the aluminum tubes claim: “[I]n a memo written two days [before his UN speech] Mr. Powell’s intelligence experts had specifically cautioned him about those very same words. ‘In fact,’ they explained, ‘the most comparable U.S. system is a tactical rocket - the U.S. Mark 66 air-launched 70-millimeter rocket - that uses the same, high-grade (7075-T6) aluminum, and that has specifications with similar tolerances.’”<sup>416</sup>

Defense Department experts also found the aluminum tubes to be consistent with use as rockets, not nuclear weapons production. When the CIA asked Pentagon engineers to review the Iraqi tubes, they found the tubes “were perfectly usable for rockets.”<sup>417</sup>

British intelligence experts also found it far-fetched that the Iraqi aluminum tubes could be used for nuclear weapons. **They believed the tubes would require “substantial re-engineering” to work in centrifuges**, according to Britain's review of its prewar intelligence. Their experts found it “paradoxical” that Iraq would order such finely crafted tubes only to radically rebuild each one for a centrifuge.<sup>418</sup>

The highly respected Institute for Science and International Security also issued a series of lengthy reports using non-classified data to rebut the contention that the aluminum tubes could be used for nuclear weapons production. The first of these reports was issued on September 23, 2002,<sup>419</sup> but it received no credence or even a response by the Bush Administration.

The IAEA also scrutinized the claims that Iraq's aluminum tubes could be used to manufacture weapons-grade uranium:

[IAEA head Jack] Baute . . . made quick work of the aluminum tubes. He assembled a team of experts--two Americans, two Britons, and a German--with 120 years of collective experience with centrifuges. After reviewing tens of thousands of Iraqi transaction records and inspecting Iraqi front companies and military production facilities with the rest of the IAEA unit, **they concluded, according to a senior IAEA official, that ‘all evidence points to that this is for the rockets’--the same conclusion reached by the State and Energy Departments.**<sup>420</sup>

As *The New York Times* reported, “Unlike ‘Joe,’ experts at the international agency had worked with Zippe centrifuges, and they spent hours with him explaining why they believed his analysis was flawed. They pointed out errors in his calculations. They noted design discrepancies. They also sent reports challenging the centrifuge claim to American government experts through the embassy in Vienna, a senior official said.”<sup>421</sup> The Bush Administration sought to convince the IAEA that their analysis was flawed, but to little avail. On January 22, 2003, “‘Joe’ of the CIA flew to Vienna to argue his case before the international body.”<sup>422</sup> His presentation was weak and unpersuasive. As one participant in the meeting recalled: Everybody was embarrassed when he came and made this presentation, embarrassed and disgusted. . . We were going insane, thinking, ‘Where is he coming from?’”<sup>423</sup>

It is also important to note that even the CIA, which nominally supported the Administration's charges regarding Iraq's use of the tubes for nuclear weapons, had a long detailed history noting that these charges were not without controversy or caveat. Consider the following:

- A June 20, 2001 CIA paper found the tubes were “more consistent” with a centrifuge application, but “we are also considering non-nuclear applications for the tubes.”<sup>424</sup>



- A June 30, 2001 CIA paper found that if Iraq claimed the tubes had a conventional use, “that cannot be discounted.”<sup>425</sup>
- A November 24, 2001 CIA paper described “divergent views” about the tubes’ intended use.<sup>426</sup>
- Toward the end of 2001, according to the WMD report, “the CIA informed senior policymakers that it believed the tubes were destined for use in Iraqi gas centrifuges,” but noted “that there was disagreement within the Intelligence Community concerning the most likely use for the tubes.”<sup>427</sup>
- An August 1, 2002 CIA memo found the tubes were “suitable” for uranium enrichment but included a text box with possible other uses.<sup>428</sup>

Despite the tremendous weight of evidence indicating that the aluminum tubes being procured by Iraq were not realistically usable for uranium, the Bush Administration never the less adopted and persisted in relying on this argument. One congressional investigator described the debate as a “holy war,”<sup>429</sup> while an intelligence analyst stated: “You had senior American officials like Condoleezza Rice saying the only use of this aluminum really is uranium centrifuges. She said that on television. And that’s just a lie.”<sup>430</sup>

It is clear from our investigation that intense political pressure played a role in this decision, as well as cherry-picking and using only intelligence that supported a decision to invade Iraq. Our investigation also shows that the Bush Administration further manipulated the intelligence regarding the aluminum tubes by selectively leaking confidential information and by selectively declassifying information that supported its pre-determined position.

We know of the intense pressure to adopt the Administration’s claims that the aluminum tubes were to be used as centrifuges because of explicit admissions by Bush Administration officials. For example, intelligence analysts informed members of the Senate Intelligence Committee, “There’s so much pressure, you know, they keep telling us, go back and find the right answer.”<sup>431</sup> Another source learned that Energy Department personnel were pressured to silence their criticisms of the Administration’s aluminum tubes theory, with one expert at the Department’s Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California saying, “The Administration can say what it wants and we are expected to remain silent.”<sup>432</sup> Yet another Energy Department rocket engineer complained that the proponents “had ‘an agenda’ and were trying ‘to bias us’ into agreeing that the Iraqi tubes were not fit for rockets.”<sup>433</sup>

As David Barstow, William J. Broad, and Jeff Gerth summarized in their report in *The New York Times*, when it came to the issue of the aluminum tubes, “[s]enior administration officials repeatedly failed to fully disclose the contrary views of America’s leading nuclear scientists . . . [t]hey sometimes overstated even the most dire intelligence assessments of the tubes, yet minimized or rejected the strong



doubts of nuclear experts. They worried privately that the nuclear case was weak, but expressed sober certitude in public. One result was a largely one-sided presentation to the public that did not convey the depth of evidence and argument against the administration's most tangible proof of a revived nuclear weapons program in Iraq."<sup>434</sup>

Our investigation has also found that classified intelligence information supporting the Bush Administration's position regarding the aluminum tubes was leaked to the press. For example, on Sunday, September 8, 2002, the lead story in *The New York Times*, written by Judith Miller and Michael R. Gordon, quotes "anonymous" Administration officials as stating that "Iraq has stepped up its quest for nuclear weapons and has embarked on a worldwide hunt for materials to make an atomic bomb."<sup>435</sup> The article goes on to source "administration officials" for the proposition that "[i]n the last 14 months, Iraq has sought to buy thousands of specially designed aluminum tubes, which American officials believe were intended as components of centrifuges to enrich uranium" and that "[t]he diameter, thickness and other technical specifications of the aluminum tubes had persuaded American intelligence experts that they were meant for Iraq's nuclear program."<sup>436</sup>

Subsequent media accounts have traced the story, at least in part to Paul Wolfowitz:

In the summer of 2002, [Deputy Defense Secretary Paul] Wolfowitz convened a secret meeting [concerning the tubes] in his office with Francis Brooke, the I.N.C. adviser, and Khidir Hamza, a former chief of Saddam's nuclear program, who had defected to America in 1994 . . . Wolfowitz circulated his conclusions to his administration allies. A few days later, the story of the 'nuclear' tubes was leaked to *The New York Times*, where it landed on the front page.<sup>437</sup>

On the CNN Documentary, *Dead Wrong*, an anonymous source characterized the dissemination of this biased and slanted information to Miller and Gordon as "official leaking": "I would call it official leaking because I think these were authorized conversations between the press and members of the intelligence community that further misrepresented the nature of the intelligence community's disagreement on this issue."<sup>438</sup>

Our investigation has also learned that administration officials appear to have leaked classified information to the press well before the *New York Times* article. A July 29, 2002 article in the *Washington Times*, titled "Iraq Seeks Steel for Nukes" reported:

Procurement agents from Iraq's covert nuclear-arms program were detected as they tried to purchase stainless-steel tubing, uniquely used in gas centrifuges and a key component in making the material for nuclear bombs, from an unknown supplier, said administration officials familiar with intelligence

reports . . . U.S. intelligence agencies believe the tubing is an essential component of Iraq's plans to enrich radioactive uranium to the point where it could be used to fashion a nuclear bomb . . . The covert nuclear-acquisition effort was detected in mid-June, and reports about the activities were then circulated to senior Bush administration policy officials. "This is only one sign that Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear-weapons program," one official said.<sup>439</sup>

The coordinated leak campaign involved the very highest levels of the Bush Administration. It began on the eve of the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks when numerous high level officials appeared on the Sunday talk shows to highlight the aluminum tube "discovery." Among other things:

- Condoleezza Rice stated: "[Iraq has obtained] high quality aluminum tubes that are only really suited for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs" and "We don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud."<sup>440</sup>
- Vice President Dick Cheney stated: "I do know with absolutely certainty that he is using his procurement system to acquire the equipment he needs to enrich uranium to build a nuclear weapon"<sup>441</sup>
- Donald Rumsfeld stated: "Imagine a September 11 with weapons of mass destruction."<sup>442</sup>

It was the leak to *The New York Times* that enabled Bush Administration officials to even have these specific discussions on the Sunday talk shows. As *Knight Ridder* explained, "[the leaks] appearance in the nation's most influential paper also gave Cheney and Rice an opportunity to discuss the matter the same day on the Sunday television talk shows. They could discuss the article, but otherwise they wouldn't have been able to talk about classified intelligence in public."<sup>443</sup> Former NSC official Rand Beers observed that, "[a]s they [the Bush Administration] embellished what the intelligence community was prepared to say and as the press reported that information, it began to acquire its own sense of truth and reality."<sup>444</sup>

The September 8, 2002 leak to Miller and Gordon was not the only example of such selective leaking. The Administration went so far as to note and then dismiss the intra-Administration debate concerning the tubes in a September 13, 2002 leak to *The New York Times*. A *New York Times* article that day quoted an unnamed senior administration official dismissing the tubes debate as a "footnote, not a split."<sup>445</sup> Citing another unnamed administration source, the article reported that the "best technical experts and nuclear scientists at laboratories like Oak Ridge supported the CIA assessments."<sup>446</sup>

The leak even went so far as to misrepresent the various agencies' position on the tubes debate, as the article reported the administration officials as claiming "it was the intelligence agencies' unanimous view that the type of tubes that Iraq has been seeking are used to make such centrifuges" and "[t]he Defense Intelligence

Agency and the National Security Agency support the C.I.A. view, the officials said.”<sup>447</sup> These claims, as we now know, were false.

The Bush Administration went even further to guarantee that its selective and one-sided leaking would go unchallenged - by muzzling anyone within the Administration who would expose any contrary views. On September 13, the day *The New York Times* article appeared, the Energy Department forwarded a directive forbidding employees from discussing the tubes matter with reporters.<sup>448</sup>

The Bush Administration also selectively declassified information regarding the aluminum tubes to support its case for war. This can be seen in the October 1, 2002 declassified NIE, which left out the views of those in the Administration who questioned the ability of Iraq to use the tubes as uranium centrifuges:

On October 1, 2002, Tenet produced a declassified NIE. But Graham and Durbin were outraged to find that it omitted the qualifications and countervailing evidence that had characterized the classified version and played up the claims that strengthened the administration's case for war. For instance, the intelligence report cited the much-disputed aluminum tubes as evidence that Saddam “remains intent on acquiring” nuclear weapons. And it claimed, “All intelligence experts agree that Iraq is seeking nuclear weapons and that these tubes could be used in a centrifuge enrichment program” – a blatant mischaracterization. Subsequently, the NIE allowed that “some” experts might disagree but insisted that “most” did not, never mentioning that the DOE's expert analysts had determined the tubes were not suitable for a nuclear weapons program.<sup>449</sup>

d. Acquisition of Uranium from Niger

*“They got pounded on, day after day, ‘. . . and received no consistent backup from Tenet and his senior staff. Pretty soon you say F\*\*\* it.’ And they began to provide the intelligence that was wanted.”*

-----2002 statement by a senior CIA Analyst<sup>450</sup>

The Bush Administration also made numerous misstatements regarding the charge that Iraq had sought to acquire a form of uranium from Niger known as “yellow cake,” which could be converted into nuclear weapons grade uranium. The record indicates that the Bush Administration made these charges without building any sort of credible foundation, and did so notwithstanding overwhelming intelligence and information to the contrary.

In his January 2003 State of the Union Address, President Bush stated, “the British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.”<sup>451</sup> On January 20, 2003, President Bush made a written statement to Congress that Iraq's report to the UN “failed to deal with issues

which have arisen since 1998 including . . . attempts to acquire uranium and the means to enrich it."<sup>452</sup> Also, on January 26, 2003, Secretary Powell, speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, asked, "Why is Iraq still trying to procure uranium?"<sup>453</sup> In a January 23, 2003 Op-Ed column in *The New York Times*, Condoleezza Rice wrote that the "false declaration . . . fails to account for or explain Iraq's efforts to get uranium from abroad."<sup>454</sup> On January 29, 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated at a press conference that Hussein's "regime has the design for a nuclear weapon, was working on several different methods of enriching uranium, and recently was discovered seeking significant quantities from Africa."<sup>455</sup>

The Secretary of Defense, in Congressional testimony, also claimed that Saddam was "aggressively pursuing nuclear weapons."<sup>456</sup> In a discussion about Iraq with Congressional leaders, as the President was providing Members of Congress with information to justify his request for an authorization to use force in Iraq, President Bush flatly declared that Saddam was seeking nuclear materials and could build a nuclear bomb "within a year."<sup>457</sup>

These statements were not true. On March 7, 2003, the head of the IAEA, Dr. Mohammed ElBaradei, informed the UN Security Council that the Italian Documents, "which formed the basis for the reports of recent uranium transactions between Iraq and Niger – are in fact not authentic."<sup>458</sup> Six months after the President's State of the Union speech, on July 7, 2003, the White House finally confirmed that the President's assertion that Iraq tried to buy uranium from Africa was based on unsubstantiated, and possibly false, information. Ari Fleischer, then-White House Press Secretary, stated, "But specifically on the yellow cake, the yellow cake for Niger, we've acknowledged that that information did turn out to be a forgery."<sup>459</sup> The White House also admitted that the information "should not have risen to the level of a presidential speech."<sup>460</sup>

A review of the record indicates that these charges were elevated and made public because of cherry-picking and pressure by the Bush Administration on intelligence officials, and also that the charges were contradicted by the overwhelming weight of intelligence information.

First, the public record demonstrates that the Bush Administration was willing to elevate, without adequate scrutiny, the allegations that Iraq was attempting to obtain uranium from Niger. It has been reported that shortly after September 11, 2001, U.S. and British governments received, at the behest of the Italian Premier, information from Italy's Military Intelligence and Security Service (SISMI) suggesting that an Iraqi Ambassador had sought to acquire uranium from Niger.<sup>461</sup> Mr. Berlusconi was eager to help President Bush in his search for arguments for war. According to *The New York Times*, "an Italian paper," *La Repubblica*, said General Pollari, chief of SISMI, had knowingly provided the United States and Britain with forged documents.<sup>462</sup> "The newspaper . . . also reported that General Pollari had acted at the behest of Mr. Berlusconi, who was said to be eager to help President Bush in the search for

weapons in Iraq. . . . *La Repubblica* said General Pollari had held a meeting on September 9, 2002, with a national security adviser, [Stephen Hadley].”<sup>463</sup>

Vice President Cheney quickly jumped on this dated and dubious intelligence assertion and pressured intelligence officials to verify the SISMI report:

“The Vice-President saw a piece of intelligence reporting that Niger was attempting to buy uranium,” Cathie Martin, the spokeswoman for Cheney, told me. Sometime after he first saw it, Cheney brought it up at his regularly scheduled daily briefing from the C.I.A., Martin said. “He asked the briefer a question. The briefer came back a day or two later and said, ‘We do have a report, but there’s a lack of details.’” The Vice-President was further told that it was known that Iraq had acquired uranium ore from Niger in the early nineteen-eighties but that that material had been placed in secure storage by the I.A.E.A., which was monitoring it. “End of story,” Martin added. “That’s all we know.” According to a former high-level C.I.A. official, however, Cheney was dissatisfied with the initial response, and asked the agency to review the matter once again. It was the beginning of what turned out to be a year-long tug-of-war between the C.I.A. and the Vice-President’s office.<sup>464</sup>

It was during 2002 that CIA officials report severe pressure from the Bush Administration on these issues: “Senior C.I.A. analysts dealing with Iraq were constantly being urged by the Vice-President’s office to provide worst-case assessments on Iraqi weapons issues. ‘They got pounded on, day after day,’ one senior Bush Administration official [stated], and received no consistent backup from Tenet and his senior staff. “Pretty soon you say ‘F\*\*\* it.’” And they began to provide the intelligence that was wanted.”<sup>465</sup>

Later in 2002, when Elizabetta Burba, a reporter for an Italian magazine, turned over additional documents concerning the purported uranium sales to the U.S. Embassy,<sup>466</sup> the Bush Administration seized the opportunity to disseminate the charges to the highest levels of the CIA and the Pentagon. As two former CIA officials explained, “The Embassy was alerted that the papers were coming . . . and it passed them directly to Washington without even vetting them inside the Embassy. Once the documents were in Washington, they were forwarded by the CIA to the Pentagon.”<sup>467</sup>

Although the charge was still largely unverified, by the time of the President’s 2003 State of the Union address, the Bush Administration was facing a situation in which many of its claims – such as the aluminum tubes charge – had been discredited,<sup>468</sup> and the international community did not appear ready for war.<sup>469</sup> It was at this time, “four days before President Bush delivered his State of the Union address presenting the case for war against Iraq, the National Security Council staff put out a call for new intelligence to bolster claims that Saddam Hussein possessed nuclear, chemical and biological weapons or programs.”<sup>470</sup> It did so because,



according to Robert Walpole, the then-National Intelligence Officer for Strategic and Nuclear Programs, the NSC believed the nuclear case "was weak."<sup>471</sup>

Second, our investigation has confirmed that the President's and other Bush Administration officials' charges regarding uranium acquisition from Niger were made at a time when the overwhelming weight of intelligence authority was to the contrary, a fact which key Bush Administration officials were aware. We know this because of reports, filings and statements, from and on behalf of the CIA, the State Department and the IAEA.

Foremost is the fact that Ambassador Joe Wilson, who was asked by the CIA to travel to Niger in February 2002 to review the charge, found it to be false.<sup>472</sup> Wilson was able to confirm two critical facts eliminating any possibility that the SISMI report was accurate. First, he learned that any authentic memorandum of understanding concerning yellowcake sales would have required the signatures of each of Niger's Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and Minister of Mines, which did not occur: **"I saw everybody out there' Wilson said, and no one had signed such a document.** 'If a document purporting to be about the sale contained those signatures, it would not be authentic.'<sup>473</sup> Second, Wilson ascertained that since Niger had pre-sold all of its available uranium to its Japanese and European consortium partners, it had no uranium to sell to Iraq or anyone else.<sup>474</sup> Upon his return, Wilson filed his report with the CIA, which in turn circulated a report on Wilson's trip – without identifying him – to the White House and other agencies.<sup>475</sup>

Also in February 2002, the deputy commander of U.S. Armed Forces Europe, Marine Gen. Carlton Fulford, traveled to Niger and met with the country's president. He concluded that, given the controls on Niger's uranium supply, there was little chance uranium was diverted to Iraq. His report was sent to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Richard Myers. The U.S. Ambassador to Niger, Barbro Owens-Kirkpatrick was also present at the meeting and sent similar conclusions to the State Department.<sup>476</sup>

Other experts at the CIA were also highly skeptical of the claim.<sup>477</sup> Prior to the President's October 7, 2002 speech in Cincinnati, **George Tenet called Stephen Hadley, principal deputy to Condoleezza Rice, and told him that the "President should not be a fact witness on this [Niger-Uranium] issue," because his analysts had told him that the "reporting was weak."**<sup>478</sup> The CIA also faxed two memos to the National Security Council on October 6, 2002, one of which was also sent to National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, backing up Tenet's advice. One memo stated that **"the evidence is weak . . . the Africa story is overblown."**<sup>479</sup> Hadley later recalled that the uranium reference, "having been taken out of Cincinnati, it should have been taken out of the State of the Union."<sup>480</sup> It is also notable that the Senate Intelligence Report also found that in September of 2002, a CIA analyst suggested to a staff member of the White House's NSC that the White House remove from a draft speech the claim that Iraq attempted to acquire uranium from Africa.<sup>481</sup> According to the CIA



analyst, the NSC staff member responded by noting that removing the claim would leave the British "flapping in the wind."<sup>482</sup>

At the same time Tenet was sending faxes and telephoning the White House in early-October 2002, his deputy was telling the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that the American Intelligence community believed the British had stretched the case on African uranium sales to Iraq.<sup>483</sup>

It also has been reported that the CIA had sought to dissuade the British from asserting the Niger-Iraq uranium connection.<sup>484</sup> A senior intelligence official interviewed by the Associated Press in June of 2003 indicated that the CIA shared with Britain the results of Joseph Wilson's trip to Niger, advising British intelligence that claims that Iraq attempted to procure uranium from Niger are unsubstantiated.<sup>485</sup>

State Department analysts also "considered [the Niger uranium link] suspect."<sup>486</sup> In fact, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research sent a memorandum to Secretary of State Colin Powell stating that claims regarding Iraqi attempts to obtain uranium from Niger are not credible.<sup>487</sup> By October, the National Intelligence Estimate given to Congress as it considered authorizing military action, included the **State Department's finding that "claims of Iraqi pursuit of natural uranium in Africa" were "highly dubious."**<sup>488</sup> Moreover, on January 13, 2003, the INR Iraq nuclear analyst sent an e-mail to several intelligence community analysts outlining his reasoning why, "the uranium purchase agreement probably is a hoax" and concluded that "the uranium purchase agreement probably is a forgery."<sup>489</sup>

The Niger story was also rejected by the French Intelligence agency, who were explicitly sought out by the CIA:

[Alain Chouet, a senior French intelligence official] recalled that his agency was contacted by the CIA in the summer of 2001 — shortly before the attacks of Sept. 11 . . . CIA officials asked their French counterparts to check that uranium in Niger and elsewhere was secure. The former CIA official confirmed Chouet's account of this exchange. Then twice in 2002, Chouet said, the CIA contacted the French again for similar help. By mid-2002, Chouet recalled, the request was more urgent and more specific. The CIA was asking questions about a particular agreement purportedly signed by Nigerian officials to sell 500 metric tons of uranium to Iraq.<sup>490</sup>

After dispatching a team to Niger which did not find any sale or purchase of uranium, the French "told the Americans, 'Bullsh\*\*. It doesn't make any sense.' Chouet said."<sup>491</sup> Chouet also stated that "the question from CIA officials in the summer of 2002 seemed to follow almost word for word from the [forged] documents in question. He said that an Italian intelligence source, Rocco Martino, had tried to sell the documents to the French, but that in a matter of days French analysts determined the documents had been forged."<sup>492</sup>

The Bush Administration was able to insist on using the 16-word Niger uranium reference only after considerable back and forth with the CIA. On July 11, 2003, Tenet admitted that CIA officials who reviewed the draft of the State of the Union address and its remarks concerning the Niger-Iraqi uranium deal had **“raised several concerns about the fragmentary nature of the intelligence with [White House] National Security Council colleagues.”**<sup>493</sup> After noting that the CIA raised these concerns, Tenet stated that **“[s]ome of the language was changed.”**<sup>494</sup> Senator Levin has also noted that this was **“highly deceptive”** since the **“only reason”** to say that the British learned that Iraq was seeking uranium from Africa **“was to create the impression that we believed it”** although **“we actually did not believe”** it.<sup>495</sup>

By the time the President had opted to include the Iraq-Niger uranium claim in his 2003 State of the Union speech, intelligence officials were flabbergasted that the misinformation could have gone so far. Seymour Hersh describes the following discussions with intelligence officials:

The State of the Union speech was confounding to many members of the intelligence community, who could not understand how such intelligence could have got to the President without vetting. **The former intelligence official who gave me the account of the forging of the documents told me that his colleagues were also startled by the speech. They said, “Holy sh\*\*, all of the sudden the President is talking about it in the State of the Union address!” They began to panic.**<sup>496</sup>

Finally, the weakness of the Bush Administration's case can be seen by its inability to provide information supporting its position to the IAEA, and in turn, the IAEA's ease in confirming the documents were fraudulent. On February 4, 2003, the Bush Administration informed the UN's IAEA that it **“cannot confirm [the uranium] reports.”**<sup>497</sup> On March 3, 2003, the IAEA told the American government that the documents were forgeries.<sup>498</sup> On March 7, 2003, the head of the IAEA, Dr. Mohammed ElBaradei, informed the United Nations Security Council that the Italian Documents, **“which formed the basis for the reports of recent uranium transactions between Iraq and Niger – are in fact not authentic.”**<sup>499</sup> The Deputy Director General of the IAEA, Jacques Baute, had found that the Italian documents were so replete with errors that a 2-hour search on “Google” would suffice to discredit them<sup>500</sup> and was easily able to rebut these “clumsy forgeries.”<sup>501</sup>

#### e. Chemical and Biological Weapons

*“This war’s going to happen regardless of what Curveball said or didn’t say, and that the Powers That Be probably aren’t terribly interested in whether Curveball knows what he’s talking about.”*

-----February 4, 2003, Deputy Chief of the CIA's Iraqi Task Force in response to CIA Doctor<sup>502</sup>

The Bush Administration has also misstated and overstated intelligence information regarding (i) Iraq's possession of chemical weapons generally; (ii) a charge by an Iraqi defector that he had helped bury significant amounts of chemical and other weapons; (iii) the existence of mobile chemical weapons laboratories; and (iv) Iraq's ability to deliver such weapons using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The record shows that these misstatements were in contradiction of known countervailing intelligence information, and were the result of political pressure and manipulation.

First, in terms of misstatements regarding chemical weapons generally, in his October 7, 2002, speech in Cincinnati, President Bush stated: "In 1995, after several years of deceit by the Iraqi regime, the head of Iraq's military industries defected. It was then that the regime was forced to admit that it had produced more than 30,000 liters of anthrax and other deadly biological agents . . . This is a massive stockpile of biological weapons that has never been accounted for, and capable of killing millions."<sup>503</sup> In his 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush stated, "Our intelligence officials estimate that Saddam Hussein had the materials to produce as much as 500 tons of sarin, mustard, and VX nerve agent. In such quantities, these chemical agents could also kill untold thousands. He's not accounted for these materials. He has given no evidence that he has destroyed them."<sup>504</sup> In late September 2002, the President bluntly told leaders of Congress that "[t]he Iraqi regime possesses biological and chemical weapons."<sup>505</sup> In addition, Vice President Cheney, Secretary of State Powell and Secretary of State Rumsfeld made similar misstatements.<sup>506</sup>

Second, on September 12, 2002, as president Bush was preparing to speak before the UN, the White House rolled out a report entitled "Iraq: Denial and Deception," which prominently detailed charges by Iraqi defector Adnan Ihsan Saeed al-Haider that he had secretly helped bury significant amounts of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons.<sup>507</sup>

Third, in terms of misstatements regarding mobile weapons, on February 5, 2003, in an address before the United Nations, Secretary of State Colin Powell stated that he had learned that Iraq controlled several mobile biological weapons laboratories as a result of information derived from numerous defectors, describing one as "an eyewitness . . . who supervised one of these facilities" and was at the site when an accident killed 12 technicians.<sup>508</sup> Relying on supposed eyewitness accounts by an Iraqi defector known in the intelligence community as "Curveball," Powell warned that Iraq's mobile labs could brew enough weapons-grade microbes "in a single month to kill thousands upon thousands of people."<sup>509</sup> One week earlier, in his 2003 State of the Union speech, President Bush told the American people that as a result of information provided by three Iraqi defectors, "we know that Iraq, in the late 1990s, had several mobile biological weapons labs . . . designed to produce germ warfare agents and can be moved from place to a place to evade inspectors."<sup>510</sup> In February 2003, the president further stated in a radio address that "first-hand witnesses have informed us that Iraq has at least seven mobile factories" for germ warfare and that Iraq could "produce within just months hundreds of pounds of biological poisons."<sup>511</sup>

Fourth, in terms of misstatements regarding unmanned aerial vehicles, in his February 2003 address to the United Nations, Secretary Powell stated: "UAVs are well suited for dispensing chemical and biological weapons. There is ample evidence that Iraq has dedicated much effort to developing and testing spray devices that could be adapted for UAVs."<sup>512</sup> He further maintained that "every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources. These are not assertions. What we're giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence."<sup>513</sup> Just one month earlier, President Bush stated in his October 7, 2002 speech in Cincinnati, "Iraq possesses ballistic missiles with a likely range of hundreds of miles - far enough to strike Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey and other nations - in a region where more than 135,000 American civilians and service members live and work."<sup>514</sup>

These statements have been proven to be untrue. First, with respect to a chemical weapons program, David Kay conclusively stated in congressional testimony that "[m]ultiple sources with varied access and reliability have told ISG [the Iraq Survey Group] that Iraq did not have a large, ongoing, centrally controlled CW [Chemical Weapons] program after 1991. Information found to date suggests that Iraq's large-scale capability to develop, produce, and fill new CW munitions was reduced - if not entirely destroyed - during Operations Desert Storm and Desert Fox, 13 years of UN sanctions and UN inspections."<sup>515</sup>

Second, with respect to the charge by the Iraqi defector at Haider that he had buried "tons" of chemical and other weapons, the CIA confirmed this was a lie.<sup>516</sup>

Third, as to assertions regarding mobile biological weapons labs, on March 7, 2003, Hans Blix, the chief United Nations weapons inspector, told the Security Council that a series of searches had found "no evidence" of mobile biological production facilities in Iraq.<sup>517</sup> In 2004, the CIA's Iraq survey group reported they "could find nothing to corroborate Curveball's reporting."<sup>518</sup> The CIA issued a formal directive in May of 2004, stating that "[d]iscrepancies surfaced regarding the information provided by . . . Curveball in this stream of reporting, which indicate that he lost his claimed access in 1995. Our assessment, therefore, is that Curveball appears to be fabricating in this stream of reporting."<sup>519</sup>

Fourth, the Bush Administration's claims about UAV have not been substantiated. On January 28, 2004, David Kay testified on behalf of the Iraq Survey Group that Iraq's UAV program "was not a strong point." That it presented only a "theoretically possible" chance and that there was no "existing deployment capability . . . for any sort of systematic military attack."<sup>520</sup> With respect to the President's claims regarding Iraq's ability to effectuate long-range attacks against Americans, UN weapons inspectors found that the weapons in question could travel less than 200 miles - not far enough - *The Washington Post* noted, "to hit the targets Bush named."<sup>521</sup>

Each and every one of these four categories of misstatements were made after the Bush Administration knew they were not fully corroborated and were strongly contradicted by other sources, and, in some cases, appear to have been accompanied by political pressure.

i. General Assertions Regarding Chemical and Biological Weapons

With respect to general assertions regarding chemical weapons, our investigation shows they conflicted with known reports at the time, that the Bush Administration did not reveal that one of its principal sources had provided contrary information, and that many of Secretary Powell's assertions were not fully supported.

In September 2002, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) issued a report that concluded: "A substantial amount of Iraq's chemical warfare agents, precursors, munitions, and production equipment were destroyed between 1991 and 1998 as a result of Operation Desert Storm and UNSCOM (United Nations Special Commission) actions . . . [t]here is no reliable information on whether Iraq is producing and stockpiling chemical weapons or where Iraq has--or will--establish its chemical warfare agent production facilities."<sup>522</sup>

Moreover as noted in the discussion about the information provided by Hussein's son-in-law by 1995 the CIA was aware that Kamel al-Majid had stated that Iraq had destroyed these weapons soon after the Gulf War and no longer possessed any WMD. In his August 22, 1995, debriefing by UNSCOM and the IAEA, Kamel stated categorically: "I ordered destruction of all chemical weapons. All weapons-biological, chemical, missile, nuclear were destroyed."<sup>523</sup>

A declassified CIA document, apparently from a debriefing of Kamel by the United States, reads:

HUSAYN KAMIL MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS AWARE THAT THEY WOULD REACH U.S. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS...

KAMIL STRESSED THAT NO [CW] AGENT WAS HIDDEN IN IRAQ, EITHER VX OR ANY OTHER.<sup>524</sup>

In addition, shortly before the Iraq war, *Newsweek* published a story revealing the specifics of what Kamel had said in 1995:

Hussein Kamel, the highest-ranking Iraqi official ever to defect from Saddam Hussein's inner circle, told CIA and British intelligence officers and U.N. inspectors in the summer of 1995 that after the gulf war, Iraq destroyed all its chemical and biological weapons stocks and the missiles to deliver them . . . Kamel was interrogated in separate sessions by the CIA, Britain's M.I.6 and a trio from the United Nations, led by the inspection team's head, Rolf Ekeus. NEWSWEEK has obtained the notes of Kamel's U.N. debrief, and verified that



the document is authentic. NEWSWEEK has also learned that Kamel told the same story to the CIA and M.I.6. (The CIA did not respond to a request for comment.)<sup>525</sup>

Finally, a comprehensive review of Secretary Powell's statements regarding chemical and biological weapons was compared to State Department and other analyses.<sup>526</sup> The comparison indicates that, contrary to his assertions, many of Mr. Powell's statements were not fully supportable. For example, the Secretary stated that "we know from sources that a missile brigade outside Baghdad was disbursing rocket launchers and warheads containing biological warfare agents to various locations, distributing them to various locations in western Iraq."<sup>527</sup> **The January 31, 2003 INR evaluation flagged this claim as "weak."**<sup>528</sup> A more detailed analysis of Secretary Powell's UN statements regarding chemical weapons is available at [http://www.house.gov/judiciary\\_democrats/iraqrept.html](http://www.house.gov/judiciary_democrats/iraqrept.html). Powell later showed a slide of a satellite photograph of an Iraqi munitions bunker, and stated: "The two arrows indicate the presence of sure signs that the bunkers are storing chemical munitions. . . [t]he truck you [ . . . ] see is a signature item. It's a decontamination vehicle in case something goes wrong."<sup>529</sup> **The January 31, 2003 INR evaluation also flagged this claim as "weak."**<sup>530</sup> Powell further stated: "UAVs outfitted with spray tanks constitute an ideal method for launching a terrorist attack using biological weapons."<sup>531</sup> **Like his other statements, the January 31, 2003 INR evaluation had flagged this statement as "weak."**<sup>532</sup>

## ii. Assertions Regarding Buried Chemical and Other Weapons

With regard to the charges that tons of chemical, biological and other weapons were buried underground in Iraq with the help of a defector, Aduan Ihsan Saeed al-Haedu, we now know that the Administration knew that the charges had been disproved when it released its report trumpeting the charges. As James Bamford recently wrote:

The illegal arms, according to al-Haideri, were buried in subterranean wells, hidden in private villas, even stashed beneath the Saddam Hussein Hospital, the largest medical facility in Baghdad. It was damning stuff – just the kind of evidence the Bush administration was look for. If the charges were true, they would offer the White House a compelling reason to invade Iraq and depose Saddam. That's why the Pentagon had flown a CIA polygraph expert to Pattaya: to question al-Haideri and confirm, once and for all, that Saddam was secretly stockpiling weapons of mass destruction. **There was only one problem: It was all a lie. After a review of the sharp peaks and deep valleys on the polygraph chart, the intelligence officer concluded that al-Haideri had made up the entire story, apparently in the hopes of securing a visa.**<sup>533</sup>

The polygraph was completed in December 2001, ten months before the White House report was issued.<sup>534</sup>



### iii. Assertions Regarding Mobile Biological Weapons

Given the massive weight of authorities raising concerns about Curveball, key officials in the Bush Administration had to have known their biological weapons charges were problematic. These doubts were brought to the Bush Administration's attention before Secretary of State Powell gave his February 2003 United Nations address, and were also raised repeatedly and persistently by German and British intelligence agencies, as well as by key officials within the CIA.

German intelligence authorities voiced many substantive concerns to the Bush Administration about relying on Curveball for mobile weapons labs charges. As *The Los Angeles Times* recently reported:

The German intelligence officials responsible for one of the most important informants on Saddam Hussein's suspected weapons of mass destruction say that the Bush Administration and the CIA repeatedly exaggerated his claims during the run-up to the war in Iraq. Five senior officials from Germany's Federal Intelligence Service, or BND, said in interviews with *The Times* that they warned U.S. intelligence authorities that the source, an Iraqi defector code-named Curveball, never claimed to produce germ weapons and never saw anyone else do so. Curveball's German handlers for the last six years said his information was often vague, mostly secondhand and impossible to confirm. **"This [Curveball] was not substantial evidence . . . [w]e made clear we could not verify the things he said."** The German authorities . . . also said that their informant suffered from emotional and mental problems. "He is not a stable, psychologically stable guy," said a BND official who supervised the case. "He is not a completely normal person," agreed a BND analyst.<sup>535</sup>

As one senior German intelligence officer explained after seeing Powell's UN statements regarding Curveball: "We were shocked," the official said. *'Mein Gott! We had always told them it was not proven . . . It was not hard intelligence.'*<sup>536</sup>

British intelligence officials also raised doubts.<sup>537</sup> The Robb-Silberman Commission found that British intelligence officials had informed the CIA that they were **"not convinced that Curveball is a wholly reliable source"** and that **"elements of [his] behavior strike us as typical of . . . fabricators."**<sup>538</sup>

CIA officials also provided information questioning the Bush Administration's mobile biological weapons assertions before both the President's 2003 State of the Union Address and Secretary of State Powell's February UN address. For example, the CIA's Berlin station chief had previously forwarded a message to headquarters noting that a German official had said Curveball was "out of control" and couldn't be located.<sup>539</sup> The Station Chief warned about using Curveball's information on the mobile biological units in Bush's State of the Union speech because the German intelligence service considered Curveball "problematical" and said its officers had

been unable to confirm his assertions.<sup>540</sup> The station chief recommended that CIA headquarters give "serious consideration" before using that unverified information.<sup>541</sup>

On February 4, 2003, the day before Secretary Powell's speech, the CIA doctor who had met with Curveball sent an urgent e-mail stating that he "was deemed a fabricator. Need I say more?"<sup>542</sup> The Deputy Chief of the CIA's Iraqi Task Force replied to the doctor, upon receiving the doctor's email: "As I said last night, let's keep in mind the fact that this war's going to happen regardless of what Curveball said or didn't say, and that the Powers That Be probably aren't terribly interested in whether Curveball knows what he's talking about."<sup>543</sup>

Also, shortly before Mr. Powell's UN presentation, a CIA official questioned the sources he was using to make the mobile biological weapons labs claims. According to the Senate Intelligence Committee Report, "a [CIA] detailee [was provided] a draft of the BW [mobile biological weapons] section of Secretary Powell's United Nations speech on February 2 or 3, 2003, according to the CIA. After reading the speech, the detailee wrote an electronic mail (e-mail) to the Deputy Chief of the Iraqi Task Force to express his concerns about the use of the four HUMINT [human intelligence] sources cited in the speech."<sup>544</sup>

Thus, for example, with respect to the first source, Curveball, the detailee wrote: I do have a concern with the validity of the information based on CURVEBALL . . . were having major handling issues with him and were attempting to determine, if in fact, CURVEBALL was who he said he was. **These issues, in my opinion, warrant further inquiry, before we use the information as the backbone of one of our major finding of the existence of a continuing Iraqi BW program!**"<sup>545</sup> The detailee also expressed concern about the second source cited in Powell's speech - an Iraqi civil engineer in a position to know the details of the program.<sup>546</sup> Among other credibility issues, the detailee stated that the source "sure didn't corroborate 'curve ball's' information."<sup>547</sup> With respect to the fourth source - an Iraqi Major who defected and had purportedly confirmed that Iraq had mobile biological laboratories - the Defense Intelligence Agency has issued a "fabrication notice" on him in May of 2002.<sup>548</sup>

Beyond ignoring the weight of intelligence authority, the record also indicates evidence that the Bush Administration manipulated intelligence information. For example, with regard to the CIA-prepared intelligence estimate, the *Los Angeles Times* reports: **"Despite the lack of access or any new reports from Curveball, U.S. intelligence sharply upgraded its assessments of Iraq's biological weapons before the war. The shift is reflected in declassified portions of National Intelligence Estimates, which are produced as the authoritative judgment of the 15 U.S. intelligence agencies. [. . . Significantly] the caveats [previously expressed by intelligence officials] disappeared after the Sept. 11 attacks."**<sup>549</sup>

A Congressional staffer who was privy to the CIA's threat assessment confirmed that the assessment merely collected arguments for going to war, without doing any substantive review or critique:

[i]t highlighted "extensive Iraqi chem-bio programs and nuclear programs and links to terrorism" but then included a footnote that read, "This information comes from a source known to fabricate in the past." The staffer concluded that "they didn't do analysis. What they did was they just amassed everything they could that said anything bad about Iraq and put it into a document."<sup>550</sup>

#### iv. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

Finally, the record shows that the Bush Administration made false charges regarding UAVs and Iraq's ability to direct weapons far afield, regardless of the weight of authority to the contrary. As explained in a National Intelligence Estimate, the government entity most knowledgeable about UAVs - the Air Force's National Air and Space Intelligence Center - "does not agree that Iraq is developing UAVs primarily intended to be delivery platforms for chemical and biological (CBW) agents."<sup>551</sup> Instead, the Air Force experts asserted that "[t]he small size of Iraq's new UAV strongly suggests a primary role of reconnaissance."<sup>552</sup>

Moreover, with regard to assertions by the President that biological and other weapons can be used by Iraq to target nations far abroad, including the United States, the CIA "increasingly believed that the attempted purchase of the mapping software . . . may have been inadvertent."<sup>553</sup> In an intelligence estimate on threats to the United States homeland published in January 2003, Air Force Defense Intelligence Agency and Army analysts agreed that the proposed purchase was "not necessarily indicative of an intent to target the U.S. homeland."<sup>554</sup>

### **3. Encouraging and Countenancing Torture and Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment**

Our investigation has found that the Bush Administration has not only countenanced, but also paved the way, for torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and other violations of international treaties. While additional violations of international treaties may well have occurred in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, our focus in this section will be on the violations that occurred in Iraq, to which this report is directed.

In April of 2004, the world was shocked when photos of torture and humiliation of Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib prison were leaked to the press. On May 6, President Bush stated that the "wrongdoers will be brought to justice," and "that the actions of those folks in Iraq do not represent the values of the United States of America."<sup>555</sup> More than a year later, our investigation has found that the abuse was not the result

of a “few bad apples,” as initially claimed, but that the responsibility lies within the highest levels of the Bush Administration.

**a. Documented Instances of Torture and Other Legal Violations**

*“I questioned some of the things that I saw . . . such things as leaving inmates in their cell with no clothes or in female underpants, handcuffing them to the door of their cell — and the answer I got was, ‘This is how military intelligence (MI) wants it done.’”*

-----January, 2004, Sergeant Ivan L. Frederick II, soldier of the 372nd Military Police Company in a letter to family describing acts committed against Iraqi detainees at Abu Ghraib.<sup>556</sup>

**i. Torture and Murder**

Investigations conducted by the military; as well as international human rights organizations including Human Rights First, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the ACLU, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch, and media organizations; have identified numerous detainee deaths, incidents of torture, and other abuses under international law in Iraq.

The “Taguba Report” was prepared by Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba at the request of Lt. Gen. Ricardo S. Sanchez, the U.S. Commander of the Combined Joint Task Force in Iraq. The purpose was to investigate the conduct of the 800th Military Police Brigade, principally at the Abu Ghraib prison facility.<sup>557</sup> Over the course of a month, General Taguba headed a team that reviewed reports of prior military investigations, witness statements by military police and military intelligence personnel, potential suspects, and detainees. Moreover, the Taguba investigation conducted its own interviews and collected additional evidence.<sup>558</sup> In late February 2004, General Taguba issued his report, which documented numerous instances of torture and other unlawful conduct:

between October and December 2003, at the Abu Ghraib Confinement Facility (BCCF), numerous incidents of sadistic, blatant, and wanton criminal abuses were inflicted on several detainees. This systemic and illegal abuse of detainees was intentionally perpetrated by several members of the military police guard force . . . of the Abu Ghraib Prison (BCCF). The allegations of abuse were substantiated by detailed witness statements . . . and the discovery of extremely graphic photographic evidence.<sup>559</sup>

The Taguba Report has confirmed that military and intelligence personnel and DOD contractors were responsible for “numerous incidents of sadistic, blatant, and wanton criminal abuses . . . inflicted on several detainees,” and that such abuses were “systemic,” “illegal,” and “intentionally perpetrated.”<sup>560</sup> The Report details that intentional acts of abuse committed by military personnel include “punching, slapping

and kicking detainees,”<sup>561</sup> rape, use of military dogs to intimidate detainees, and numerous other types of mistreatment.<sup>562</sup> There are detailed witness statements by numerous officers and soldiers within the 800th Brigade which substantiate these allegations.<sup>563</sup> Moreover, these allegations have been confirmed by photographs and videos depicting the graphic images of abuse.<sup>564</sup> It is important to note that Major General Taguba’s investigation delved into only one brigade at one prison in Iraq.

Numerous international human rights groups have detailed even more serious abuses. Human Rights First has uncovered at least 16 detainee deaths in Iraq, including at least one at Abu Ghraib,<sup>565</sup> that the military itself has found to be homicides.<sup>566</sup> Many of those victims were found to have been tortured to death.<sup>567</sup> While other deaths have not been directly linked to acts of torture, evidence that detainees died while bound and blindfolded<sup>568</sup> increases the likelihood that these deaths were the direct result of detainee abuse. At least seven more deaths remain under investigation at the time of writing this Report, including a case where a marine broke the neck of a detainee, causing the detainee’s death.<sup>569</sup> Moreover, Human Rights First has also found that a number of these deaths occurred after the abuses at Abu Ghraib became public.<sup>570</sup>

The ICRC also has made similar findings regarding the treatment of Iraqi detainees.<sup>571</sup> An ICRC report has concluded that acts of violence and degradation were used on a “systematic” basis and included:

- Extended time spent in stress positions
- Hanging of detainees by their arms for hours at a time
- Deprivation of sleep, food, water, clothing and light
- Sexual assault and humiliation of male and female detainees
- Threatening and simulating electrocution and murder
- Beatings and murder.<sup>572</sup>

The ACLU has used Freedom of Information Act requests to collect thousands of pages of internal documents, confirming the physical and sexual abuse of detainees and citizens by military personnel in Iraq and elsewhere.<sup>573</sup> These internal documents reveal allegations of abuse against juveniles in Iraq, including one teenager whose jaw was broken as a result of an officer’s blow to the face.<sup>574</sup> In another instance, military personnel electrically shocked a 16-18 year old prisoner on his feet and neck while he was in zipcuffs, hit him with a pistol, knocking him unconscious and leaving him to bleed.<sup>575</sup> The internal documents also reveal that detainees were exercised to the point of extreme fatigue, which, in one instance, may have caused the death of an otherwise healthy detainee.<sup>576</sup>

Amnesty International has reported that acts of torture have not only occurred at detention sites but also continue to be perpetrated against Iraqis during house raids and arrests.<sup>577</sup> They found:

- Hooding of suspects upon arrest.
- Striking of suspects with rifles.
- Soldiers taking aim on suspects with rifles.
- Injuring of suspects with severe blows by punching and kicking.<sup>578</sup>

Human Rights Watch confirmed with three officers that torture was a daily practice at the 82nd Airborne Division in Iraq.<sup>579</sup> Detainees singled out for interrogation or retribution were reportedly viciously abused by army personnel.<sup>580</sup> They were denied food and water, kept awake for days at a time, put in stress positions, or forced to do vigorous exercise until they lost consciousness. Their detention center, located only fifteen minutes from Abu Ghraib prison, became known amongst the locals for its abuse: "The "Murderous Maniacs" was what they called us at our camp because they knew if they got caught by us and got detained by us before they went to Abu Ghraib then it would be hell to pay."<sup>581</sup>

Human Rights Watch found that others were abused for apparently no reason at all. One officer recalled a cook who came into the detention area in a bad mood, seeking to work out his "frustration:" "One day a sergeant shows up and tells a [detainee] to grab a pole. He told him to bend over and broke the guy's leg with a mini Louisville Slugger that was a metal bat. He was the f\*\*\*ing cook. He shouldn't be in with no [detainee]s."<sup>582</sup> That officer continued, "Everyone in camp knew if you wanted to work out your frustration you show up at the PUC tent. In a way it was sport."<sup>583</sup>

*Newsweek* chronicled the abuse witnessed by Army Specialist Anthony Lagouranis. He said abuse was part of the job, expected of soldiers in an effort to loosen up detainees and make them talk:

**I think our policies *required* abuse . . . There were freaking horrible things people were doing. I saw [detainees] who had feet smashed with hammers. One detainee told me he had been forced by Marines to sit on an exhaust pipe, and he had a softball-sized blister to prove it. The stuff I did was mainly torture lite: sleep deprivation, isolation, stress positions, hypothermia. We used dogs.**<sup>584</sup>

*Time* magazine recently uncovered that CIA interrogators tried to cover up the death of an Iraqi ghost detainee who died while being interrogated at Abu Ghraib prison.<sup>585</sup> According to documents obtained by *Time*, the death of secret detainee Manadel al-Jamadi was ruled a homicide in the Defense Department autopsy, which states that after approximately 90 minutes of interrogation in the custody of CIA officials, he died of "blunt force injuries" and "asphyxiation."<sup>586</sup> Further evidence of this cover-up is demonstrated by documents obtained by *Time*, including many "photographs of his battered corpse -- iced to keep it from decomposing in order to hide the true circumstances of his dying . . ."<sup>587</sup> *Time* reported that, as a result of al-



Jamadi's treatment, "Military Police at Iraq's notorious Abu Ghraib prison dubbed him the Iceman; others used the nickname Mr. Frosty."<sup>588</sup>

*The New York Times* has reported on substantial evidence that torture and murder were used by CIA operatives in Iraq. An elite group of CIA operatives hunting insurgents in Iraq were "accused of abusing a number of prisoners between October 2003 and April 2004 by kicking them, punching them, twisting their testicles, breaking their fingers and pointing loaded guns at them."<sup>589</sup> This type of abuse even led to deaths. At least three Iraqis have died while in CIA custody.<sup>590</sup>

## ii. Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment

The ICRC has identified numerous incidents of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment (CID) in Iraq, which, while short of torture, has been found to be subject to the Geneva Conventions and the Convention Against Torture.<sup>591</sup>

According to the February 2004 report of the ICRC, U.S. military intelligence abuse of Iraqi detainees during interrogation was widespread, harsh, brutal, and, in some cases, "tantamount to torture."<sup>592</sup> The ICRC identified numerous other incidents of cruel treatment that can be confirmed by simply looking at the released photos and reports, including:

- "punching, slapping and kicking detainees[, and] jumping on their naked feet";
- "videotaping and photographing naked male and female detainees";
- "forcibly arranging detainees in various sexually explicit positions for photographing";
- "forcing detainees to remove their clothing and keeping them naked for several days at a time";
- "positioning a naked detainee on a . . . Box, with a sandbag on his head, and attaching wires to his fingers, toes, and penis to simulate electric torture";
- "placing a dog chain or strap around a naked detainee's neck and having a female Soldier pose for a picture";
- "a male MP [military police] guard having sex with a female detainee";
- "using military working dogs (without muzzles) to intimidate and frighten detainees, and in at least one case biting and severely injuring a detainee"; and
- "taking photographs of dead Iraqi detainees."<sup>593</sup>

## iii. Other Possible Violations of International Treaties

We have also identified practices designed to keep detainees hidden from the ICRC, namely detainees being moved around in Iraq in secret (known as "ghosting") and individuals being transferred out of Iraq for interrogation. Both of these practices would violate the Geneva Conventions.<sup>594</sup> We have learned about these practices

from several sources. *The New York Times* confirmed in a report that the CIA “has secretly transport[ed] as many as a dozen detainees out of Iraq in the last six months [from April to October 2004].”<sup>595</sup>

Army General Paul Kern testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in September of 2004 that the United States had held as many as 100 ghost detainees in Iraq.<sup>596</sup> Maj. Gen. Kern even admitted to the Committee that the ghosting was intended to keep international monitors from having contact with the prisoners: “people . . . were brought into the facilities and . . . were moved so that they could not be identified by the International Red Cross.”<sup>597</sup> He stated that because there was no record of how many there were, he could not definitely tell the Committee how many there were, but that the CIA maintained up to three dozen ghost detainees at the now infamous Abu Ghraib facility.<sup>598</sup>

Moreover, it appears from statements of Col. Thomas M. Pappas, head of military intelligence operations at Abu Ghraib, that ghosting was coordinated between military and CIA commanders on the ground.<sup>599</sup> During his interview with investigators, Col. Pappas said that Col. Steven Boltz, then the second-ranking military intelligence officer in Iraq, approved the CIA’s use of Abu Ghraib prison to store “ghost detainees.”<sup>600</sup> Pappas also told investigators he initially “‘had concerns over this arrangement’ and asked Col. Boltz if they were going to continue housing ghosts. ‘[Boltz] said yes, to facilitate [military intelligence’s] request.’”<sup>601</sup>

Recent reports coming out of Iraq verify the use of a weapon called white phosphorus (WP) in combat. An Italian state broadcaster, *RAI*, recently reported that American forces used WP in Fallujah last year against insurgents.<sup>602</sup> According to a former American soldier who fought in Fallujah, “I heard the order to pay attention because they were going to use white phosphorus on Fallujah. In military jargon it’s known as Willy Pete. . . . Phosphorus burns bodies, in fact it melts the flesh all the way down to the bone . . . I saw the burned bodies of women and children. Phosphorus explodes and forms a cloud. Anyone within a radius of 150 metres is done for.”<sup>603</sup>

Use of WP as an incendiary weapon against civilians is banned by Protocol III of the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).<sup>604</sup> Protocol III regulates the use of weapons designed to set fire to or burn their target. The protocol proscribes targeting civilians with incendiary weapons and restricts the use of air-delivered incendiary weapons against military targets in close proximity to concentrations of noncombatants.<sup>605</sup> Protocol III only covers weapons created intentionally to set fire or burn, such as flamethrowers, and does not cover weapons that ignite fires or burn as a side effect. Because we have not signed Protocol III, the United States is theoretically not legally bound by the protocol’s provisions. Additionally, WP is not covered by the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), to which the United States is a party. This is because the CWC regulates weapons whose toxicity is specific to life processes, while WP is a general incendiary weapon.

However, grave breaches are also defined within the Geneva Conventions, as "willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health."<sup>606</sup> Thus, the use of WP in combat would appear to be illegal as it would fall within this definition of grave breaches under the Conventions, to which the United States is legally bound.

**b. Bush Administration Responsibility for Torture and Other Legal Violations**

*"In recent days, there has been a good deal of discussion about who bears responsibility for the terrible activities that took place at Abu Ghraib. These events occurred on my watch. As Secretary of Defense, I am accountable for them. I take full responsibility."*

-----May 7, 2004, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld before the House Armed Services Committee<sup>607</sup>

**i. Department of Justice**

**Failure to Adequately Prosecute Torture and Other Legal Violations by Contractors and Others Within its Jurisdiction**

There appear to be numerous instances of torture that are capable of being punished within the jurisdiction of the Justice Department, which includes the authority under the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act to pursue criminal charges against military contractors, military personnel, and CIA officers.<sup>608</sup> It is telling that only one such case has resulted in an official indictment, and no one has been convicted. In fact, according to Amnesty International, despite the numerous detainee deaths that occurred in Abu Ghraib as a result of torture and other legal violations, it appears that no member of the military has received a sentence of more than three years in prison.<sup>609</sup>

According to a recent report by the *New York Times*, despite evidence of CIA involvement in the deaths of at least four prisoners in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Justice Department has charged only one person linked to the CIA with wrongdoing in any of the cases; that person, David A. Passaro, was a contractor, not an official CIA officer, though.<sup>610</sup> In a recent *New York Times* Op-Ed, Frank Rich asks, "why have the official reports on detainee abuse at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo spared all but a single officer in the chain of command?"<sup>611</sup> This failure to investigate has occurred under both former Attorney General John Ashcroft and current Attorney General Alberto Gonzales.

Human rights law expert Scott Horton surmised that not only had the Justice Department poorly executed its investigative duties, but that then-Attorney General Ashcroft had willfully disregarded his discretionary duty to prosecute.<sup>612</sup> He also theorized that a failure to conduct meaningful investigation would continue in the future stating:

The Attorney General, John Ashcroft, and his immediate subordinates have . . . been complicit in a scheme for the commission of war crimes and accordingly will not undertake a criminal investigation. . . The Attorney General-designate, Alberto Gonzales, is a principal author of the scheme to undertake war crimes . . . [S]enior lawyers at DOJ, acting with the knowledge and support of the Attorney General, were complicit in the scheme to introduce torture and other abusive practices into authorized regimes of treatment for detainees in GWOT. It is therefore clear that DOJ will not act on its responsibility to initiate criminal investigations or undertake prosecutions of the conspirators and implementers of this scheme.<sup>613</sup>

Numerous rights groups have also expressed their outrage at the failure of the Justice Department to prosecute. They have rejected the military findings that only low-level officials were complicit in the abuses at Abu Ghraib and requested that the Justice Department investigate and prosecute higher officials.<sup>614</sup> In an open letter to Alberto Gonzales, the ACLU wrote:

There is an obvious public interest in investigating and prosecuting all persons committing torture or abuse or conspiring to commit those crimes against persons being held by the United States. A small number of enlisted men and women and a few low-ranking military officers should not be the only persons held responsible, if civilians and top military officers also engaged in wrongdoing.<sup>615</sup>

Other rights groups, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, have requested that Attorney General Gonzales “appoint a special prosecutor to investigate the roles of all U.S. officials ‘who participated in, ordered, or had command responsibility for war crimes or torture.’”<sup>616</sup> These groups have since requested that Congress conduct an independent and bipartisan investigation because there is little promise that the Justice Department will conduct any meaningful inquiries.<sup>617</sup> Moreover, the failure of our government to prosecute those responsible for acts of torture has led foreign nations to issue warrants for CIA operatives for their role in abductions and renditions.<sup>618</sup>

### Removal of Detainees from Iraq

We have clear evidence, by virtue of a March 19, 2004 memo from the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel, that the Justice Department paved the way for the removal of detainees identified above.<sup>619</sup>

The Justice Department memo undermined the Geneva Convention’s prohibition against deportation and forcible removal by stating, “that there is no evidence that the [Geneva Convention’s prohibition against deportation and forcible removal] extended to illegal aliens from occupied territory . . . and there is no evidence that international law has ever disapproved of such removals.”<sup>620</sup> The

classified memo then concludes that there is an exception to the ban against forcible transfers and deportations of protected persons, surmising that protected persons, “whether illegal aliens or not,”<sup>621</sup> may be “. . . relocate[d] . . . from occupied Iraq to another country for a brief but not indefinite period, for the purposes of interrogation.”<sup>622</sup> This memo was prepared at the request of then-White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales, as evidenced by the appearance of Gonzales’ initials handwritten on the document,<sup>623</sup> and presumably with the approval of then-Attorney General John Ashcroft.

There appears to be little doubt that this memo gave the CIA legal cover for removing both Iraqi citizens and foreigners found on Iraqi soil. **One intelligence official stated that “[t]he memo was a green light,” and that “[t]he CIA used the memo to remove other people from Iraq.”**<sup>624</sup>

Rights groups such as Human Rights First have closely linked the March 2004 memo with the practices of ghosting and rendition that have since become rampant in Iraq.<sup>625</sup> In fact, Human Rights First used evidence of Gonzales’ involvement with the memo to support its opposition to Alberto Gonzales’s appointment as Attorney General.<sup>626</sup> The group argues that: “The Goldsmith memo to Gonzales sheds light on [Gonzales’] involvement in the ‘ghost detainee’ program of secret detentions, described by Army Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba in his report as ‘deceptive, contrary to Army doctrine and in violation of international law.”<sup>627</sup>

### **Limited Construction of Torture and Applicability of CID**

The Department of Justice also bears significant responsibility for the acts of torture and other legal violations by virtue of the extreme and narrow legal views it has adopted. These are set forth in an August 1, 2002 memo setting forth an inappropriately narrow definition of torture and in Mr. Gonzales’s January 2005 confirmation hearing testimony on the jurisdictional reach of bans on CID.

An August 1, 2002 Department of Justice memo addressed to then-White House Counsel Gonzales creates a definition of torture that is contrary to international law, domestic law, and legislative intent.<sup>628</sup> **The memo claims that torture consists of “extreme acts” under U.S. law, inflicting severe pain that “must be of an intensity akin to that which accompanies serious physical injury such as death or organ failure. According to the memo, severe mental pain requires suffering not just at the moment of infliction but it also requires lasting psychological harm, such as seen in mental disorders like posttraumatic [sic] stress disorder.”**<sup>629</sup>

However, 18 U.S.C. § 2340-2340A, the federal law executing the U.N. Convention Against Torture,<sup>630</sup> does not use the word “extreme” or otherwise suggest the conclusion that “those acts must be of an extreme nature to rise to the level of torture within the meaning of Section 2340A and the Convention.”<sup>631</sup> Instead, the law provides:

(1) "torture" means an act committed by a person acting under the color of law specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering (other than pain or suffering incidental to lawful sanctions) upon another person within his custody or physical control;

(2) "severe mental pain or suffering" means the prolonged mental harm caused by or resulting from - (A) the intentional infliction or threatened infliction of severe physical pain or suffering; (B) the administration or application, or threatened administration or application, of mind-altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt profoundly the senses or the personality; (C) the threat of imminent death; (D) the threat that another person will imminently be subjected to death, severe physical pain or suffering, or the administration or application of mind-altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt profoundly the senses or personality."<sup>632</sup>

**There is nothing in this definition that requires the sensation of either organ failure or death, or a level of mental harm rising to a disorder, to invoke the law's protections.**

Mr. Gonzales has followed up this position on torture by taking the position at his confirmation hearing that the ban on Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading treatment only applies to detainees held within the United States.<sup>633</sup> When the Senate approved the CAT, however, it did so with the reservation that cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment was limited by our jurisprudence of the Eighth Amendment of the constitution.<sup>634</sup> It is therefore understood that the definition of CID treatment should be consistent with the definition of unconstitutionally "cruel" treatment under the Eighth Amendment.

However, Attorney General Gonzales has argued that the limitation was categorical and not definitional. He believes that only those individuals covered by the 8th Amendment would receive protection against cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. If so, this means that all of those foreign nationals held overseas will be stripped of protection against CID.

Mr. Gonzales's argument has been rejected by numerous groups and scholars and has been refuted by countless groups outside of the Administration.<sup>635</sup> For example, the following groups have publicly objected to this new and unfounded interpretation: Human Rights First, the American Civil Liberties Union, Amnesty International, USA, Human Rights Watch and the Center for American Progress.<sup>636</sup> Moreover, it has been rejected by Abraham D. Sofaer, the former legal adviser to the Department of State when the Reagan Administration originally signed the Convention Against Torture in 1988, who stated in a January 2005 letter to Sen. Patrick Leahy that, "the purpose of the Senate's [reservation] was to ensure that the same standards for [CID] would apply outside of the United States, as would apply inside."<sup>637</sup> Approval of recent legislative initiatives by Senator McCain and others does not alter the harm done by these extreme legal positions.



## ii. Department of Defense

### Personal Approval of Torture and Other Illegal Actions

In terms of Secretary Rumsfeld, first, he approved treatment in violation of the Geneva Conventions for individuals held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and allowed these methods to be incorporated into the detention centers in Iraq. Second, he personally approved the ghosting and removal of Iraqi detainees.

We know about his approval of unlawful tactics because, according to a letter from William Haynes to Secretary Rumsfeld, on November 27, 2002, Mr. Rumsfeld signed the Haynes action memo, which requested approval of counter-resistance techniques, and actually asked for harsher techniques.<sup>638</sup> These tactics were created for the express purpose of “enhancing [military] efforts to extract additional information” from detainees and included removal of detainee clothing, use of hoods and dogs.<sup>639</sup> The most egregious of these tactics are collectively referred to as “Category III,” and include the “use of scenarios designed to convince the detainee that death or severely painful consequences for him and/or his family are imminent.”<sup>640</sup> The memo notes that such a tactic could easily be construed as a death threat, which constitutes infliction of mental pain and suffering under the Torture Convention.<sup>641</sup> The memo also notes that another Category III tactic - use of a “wet towel and dripping water to induce the misperception of suffocation,”<sup>642</sup> could also be construed as a violation of the Torture Convention since it was likely to inflict mental harm.<sup>643</sup>

We also know that Mr. Rumsfeld had to have appreciated that these tactics would migrate to Iraq because, when he sent Maj. Gen. Geoffrey D. Miller to Iraq in the summer of 2003, the Iraqi prisons were known to be crowded and a hotbed for violence; further, Iraqi detainees were not providing enough “actionable intelligence.”<sup>644</sup> General Miller’s task was specifically to turn up the heat and, as one officer explained, incorporate the Guantanamo practices into the facilities there.<sup>645</sup> Brig. Gen. Janis L. Karpinski, head of the prison system in Iraq, stated, “[Miller] came up there and told me he was going to ‘Gitmoize’ the detention operation.”<sup>646</sup>

Further, Larry Wilkerson, former Chief of Staff to former Secretary of State Colin Powell, charged that a cabal of senior Administration officials issued directives that led to the abuse of prisoners by United States soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. “It was clear to me,” he said:

that there was a visible audit trail from the vice president’s office through the secretary of defense down to the commanders in the field that in carefully couched terms – I’ll give you that – that to a soldier in the field meant two things: we’re not getting enough good intelligence and you need to get that evidence – and oh, by the way, here’s some ways you probably can get it.<sup>647</sup>

Moreover, we now know that Secretary Rumsfeld was put on notice by the International Committee of the Red Cross that these techniques he was exporting to Iraq were considered to be **“an intentional system of cruel, unusual and degrading treatment and a form of torture.”**<sup>648</sup> These warnings began in 2003, soon after invasion, and were made to military leadership at least as high as Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz.<sup>649</sup> Secretary Rumsfeld stated by his own admission before the House Armed Services Committee on May 7, 2004, “these events occurred on my watch. As Secretary of Defense, I am accountable for them. I take full responsibility.”<sup>650</sup>

### Command Responsibility

There is substantial evidence that not only did Secretary Rumsfeld know the conditions for abuse being set and know abuse was taking place, but also that he did very little to prevent or punish the illegal activity. Specifically, it appears that Secretary Rumsfeld was well aware of or should have known the following:

- That detainees in Iraq were being tortured, or treated in a cruel, inhuman and degrading way as the International Committee of the Red Cross reported over 250 allegations of abuse to military officials in 2003 alone,<sup>651</sup> that according to former Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary Rumsfeld personally kept the President “fully informed of the concerns that were being expressed” by the ICRC,<sup>652</sup> and that there were no less than 14 public accounts of detainee abuse after the spring of 2002 and before the *60 Minutes* // airing of the Abu Ghraib photos.<sup>653</sup>
- That, as confirmed by Army Gen. Paul Kern in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, detainees were kept hidden from the International Committee of the Red Cross on numerous occasions and **“the number [of ghost detainees] is in the dozens, perhaps up to 100.”**<sup>654</sup>

Although it is clear by now that Secretary Rumsfeld either knew or should have known about the illegal practices at detention facilities in Iraq, the record shows that he refused to take serious measures either to prevent these acts from recurring or to investigate and punish those who already had mistreated detainees.

While a number of low-level individuals were punished, such a response appears to be insufficient in two important respects: the acts of torture have not been punished with the severity that is truly necessary to deter others from engaging in such conduct; and high-level officials who have encouraged or permitted the behavior in the first place have not been punished at all.

First, Human Rights First and Amnesty International estimate from publicly-available information that those who were actually punished were usually given no more than a slap on the wrist. A full 70 percent of those sanctioned by the military were given non-judicial, administrative punishments.<sup>655</sup> The longest sentenced meted

out for the death of a detainee was only three years.<sup>656</sup> While we can confirm that there have been no less than 410 criminal investigations as of June 2005 – almost all including more than one offender and more than one victim – only 74 soldiers have been criminally charged.<sup>657</sup>

Further, it appears that Secretary Rumsfeld has chosen not to investigate or to punish officials high in the chain of command. There has been nearly unanimous critique of the military investigations by groups advocating the abolition of torture and cruel treatment, such as Human Rights First, which notes that, “months after the Abu Ghraib photos were published – and nearly two years after the first abuse-related deaths in U.S. custody in the ‘war on terror’ – we are still not in a position to say that we know how to ensure that such abuses never happen again.”<sup>658</sup> Amnesty International expresses similar critiques of the military investigations, explaining that “evidence of torture and other ill-treatment by US forces in the ‘war on terror’ continues to mount, but no US agents have been charged with war crimes or torture. Over 70 percent of official actions have resulted in non-judicial or administrative punishments.”<sup>659</sup> Amnesty International further noted that “the response by the US administration to the allegations [of torture] had been inadequate.”<sup>660</sup>

### Ghosting and Removal of Detainees

We also have an admission that George Tenet specifically approved the ghosting in Iraq of a specific individual, and that Mr. Rumsfeld admitted to approving of ghosting of detainees as a special matter. During a press conference in June 2004, Secretary Rumsfeld confirmed not only that was he asked by CIA Director George Tenet to hide a specific detainee, but also that he hid the detainee and that the detainee was lost in the system for more than eight months:

Q: Mr. Secretary, I'd like to ask why last November you ordered the U.S. military to keep a suspected Ansar al-Islam prisoner in Iraq [Hiwa Abdul Rahman Rashul] secret from the Red Cross. He's now been secret for more than seven months. And there are other such shadowy prisoners in Iraq who are being kept secret from the Red Cross.

SEC. RUMSFELD: With respect to the -- I want to separate the two. Iraq, my understanding is that the investigations on that subject are going forward. With respect to the detainee you're talking about, I'm not an expert on this, but I was requested by the Director of Central Intelligence to take custody of an Iraqi national who was believed to be a high-ranking member of Ansar al-Islam. And we did so. We were asked to not immediately register the individual. And we did that. It would -- it was -- he was brought to the attention of the Department, the senior level of the Department I think late last month. And we're in the process of registering him with the ICRC at the present time . . .<sup>661</sup>

The CIA transferred Mr. Rashul to an undisclosed location outside Iraq to be interrogated.<sup>662</sup> Three months after Mr. Rashul's detention, the CIA's General Counsel determined that transferring him out of Iraq violated the Geneva Conventions.<sup>663</sup> Upon transferring Mr. Rashul from CIA custody to the US military, Director Tenet asked that the detention be kept secret, meaning that military should "not immediately register" Mr. Rashul in any military database.<sup>664</sup> Secretary Rumsfeld complied, issuing a classified order that the media have reported as stating: "Notification of the presence and or status of the detainee to the International Committee of the Red Cross, or any international or national aid organization, is prohibited pending further guidance."<sup>665</sup> Secretary Rumsfeld's order was then transmitted down the chain of command to Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, commander of US forces in Iraq.

General Sanchez then issued his own order to implement Secretary Rumsfeld's order. A media report on the Sanchez order describes that it "accepts custody and detains Hiwa Abdul Rahman Rashul, a high-ranking Ansar al-Islam member;" orders that he "remain segregated and isolated from the remainder of the detainee population;" "[o]nly military personnel and debriefers will have access to the detainee. . . . Knowledge of the presence of this detainee will be strictly limited on a need-to-know basis." "Any reports from interrogations or debriefings will contain only the minimum [sic] amount of source information . . .".<sup>666</sup>

Mr. Rashul was detained at Camp Cropper, outside Baghdad Airport, where he reportedly received only one cursory interrogation when he first arrived.<sup>667</sup> The CIA is reported to have made little effort to follow up and, when it did inquire about him in January 2004, prison officials were unable to locate him.<sup>668</sup> In addition to this, several prison officials questioned superiors to determine what to do about Rashul's given his indeterminate detention, but received no official answers.<sup>669</sup>

After media reports began circulating in June 2004 as to the existence of an unregistered detainee, Mr. Rashul was finally registered. This occurred more than eight months after he was turned over to the military and almost a year after his initial capture and detention.<sup>670</sup>

Further, in his statement to investigators, Col. Thomas M. Pappas, the top military intelligence officer at Abu Ghraib, stated that in September 2003, the CIA requested that the military intelligence officials "continue to make cells available for their detainees and that they not have to go through the normal in processing procedures."<sup>671</sup> And, as Army General Paul Kern testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in September of 2004, the U.S. had held as many as 100 ghost detainees in Iraq.<sup>672</sup>

In addition, Secretary Rumsfeld confirmed that the ghosting of detainees occurred on his watch on many occasions:

Q: But then why wasn't the -- why wasn't the Red Cross told, and there are other such prisoners being detained without the knowledge of the Red Cross?

SEC. RUMSFELD: There are -- there are instances where that occurs. And a request was made to do that, and we did.<sup>673</sup>

#### 4. Cover-ups and Retribution

*"It's slime and defend . . ."*

-----October 2, 2003, Republican aide on Capitol Hill, describing the White House's effort to raise questions about Mr. Wilson's motivations and its simultaneous effort to shore up support in the Republican ranks.<sup>674</sup>

Inevitably, information began to seep out exposing the many falsehoods and deceptions concerning the Iraq war. The release of this information – including information detailing the Niger-Iraq uranium forgeries – led members of the Bush Administration to react with a series of leaks and other actions designed to coverup their misdeeds and obtain retribution against their critics. In addition, the Bush Administration began disseminating even more falsehoods, in an apparent further effort to obscure its initial misstatements.

##### a. The Niger Forgeries and the “Sliming” of Ambassador Wilson and his Family

The most well-known example of the Bush Administration's efforts to cover up its misdeeds and exact revenge against its critics is its response to Ambassador Joseph Wilson's statements regarding the forged Niger uranium documents. Ambassador Wilson's exposures – that not only were the Niger-Iraq uranium documents forgeries, but also that the Bush Administration had been forewarned of this fact – threatened to bring down the entire house of cards of pre-war deceptions.

Beginning in the Summer of 2003, with the public disclosures concerning the Niger forgeries and the Bush Administration's apparent foreknowledge of them, members of the Administration initiated a concerted campaign to coverup their own misdeeds and taint Ambassador Wilson. The record reflects that (i) members of the Bush Administration were highly concerned about the disclosures to the point of obsession and, as a result, obtained classified information regarding Ambassador Wilson and his wife that they leaked to the press, in apparent violation of administrative requirements and non-disclosure agreements (if not criminal laws); (ii) the leak was not only in apparent retribution against the Wilsons, but also was damaging to national security; and (iii) the investigation into the leak was delayed by members of the Bush Administration, beset by conflicts of interest, and accompanied by numerous misstatements and falsehoods.<sup>675</sup> The leak story culminated in the federal criminal indictment, issued by Special Counsel Patrick Fitzgerald, of I. Lewis (“Scooter”) Libby, Vice President Cheney's Chief of Staff (the “Libby Indictment”).<sup>676</sup>

## i. Disclosure and Panic

According to the Libby Indictment, numerous media stories and inquiries into the Administration's use of faulty intelligence led to this consternation in the White House. Articles were published in *The New York Times*,<sup>677</sup> *The Washington Post*,<sup>678</sup> and *The New Republic*,<sup>679</sup> among others.<sup>680</sup>

Clearly, this media onslaught – aimed directly at one of the Bush Administration's principal rationales for the war and challenging its veracity – caused considerable turmoil in the White House. For example, after he finished a discussion on this issue with Matthew Cooper on July 11, 2003, Karl Rove expressed alarm over the damage this line of inquiry could cause the President, writing in an e-mail to Deputy Security Advisor Stephen Hadley: "When [Cooper] finished his brief heads-up he immediately launched into Niger. . . . Isn't this damaging? Hasn't president been hurt? I didn't take the bait, but I said if I were him I wouldn't get *Time* far out on this."<sup>681</sup>

According to White House sources, Libby became enraged over Wilson's disclosures to the point of obsession. *The Los Angeles Times* wrote, "Vice President Dick Cheney's chief of staff was so angry about the public statements of former ambassador Joseph C. Wilson IV, a Bush administration critic married to an undercover CIA officer, that he monitored all of Wilson's television appearances and urged the White House to mount an aggressive public campaign against him, former aides say."<sup>682</sup> *The Los Angeles Times* went on to say that "[t]he intensity with which Libby reacted to Wilson had many senior White House staffers puzzled, and few agreed with his counterattack plan or its rationale, former aides said."<sup>683</sup>

Instead of responding to these charges in an above board and factual manner, officials in the Bush Administration chose to cover up their earlier deceptions by using their positions of authority to obtain classified information to undermine and attack Ambassador Wilson and his wife. According to the Libby Indictment and other sources, this was done in apparent violation of relevant administrative requirements, non-disclosure agreements, and potentially the criminal laws.

The Libby Indictment makes clear that Mr. Libby obtained classified information about Ambassador Wilson's trip, and his wife, from at least six sources within the government, including Vice President Cheney himself. This began on May 29, 2003, when Libby sought information concerning Wilson's travel from an under secretary of state, which he received via oral reports and fax over the course of the next two weeks.<sup>684</sup> (The under secretary is reported to be John Bolton, who is now the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.<sup>685</sup>) On June 11, 2003, Libby also sought and received similar information from a CIA officer.<sup>686</sup> The next day, Libby learned from Vice President Cheney that Wilson's wife worked at the CIA's Counterproliferation Division,<sup>687</sup> which is part of the CIA's secret Clandestine Service.<sup>688</sup> Libby further broached the topic of Wilson's wife on June 14, 2003 with a CIA briefer.<sup>689</sup> Next, on July 8, 2003, Libby asked the Vice President's counsel, David



Addington, about CIA paperwork requirements for trips by spouses of CIA employees.<sup>690</sup> Finally, at some point before July 8, 2003, Libby obtained additional information about Wilson's wife from the Assistant to the Vice President for Public Affairs.<sup>691</sup>

Significantly, Libby was not the only individual in the White House soliciting or receiving information about Ambassador Wilson's wife in the wake of the disclosures about possible Bush Administration wrongdoing and misstatements. The record indicates that numerous additional officials, including Vice President Cheney,<sup>692</sup> Secretary of State Powell,<sup>693</sup> and Political Director Rove,<sup>694</sup> were also obtaining access to classified information concerning Wilson's wife.

Once these various high-ranking Administration officials obtained this information that they believed would help with damage control on the embarrassing Niger disclosures, it was widely shared with others in the Administration as well as the press. For example, Mr. Libby shared the classified information with his principal deputy;<sup>695</sup> with Karl Rove;<sup>696</sup> and with then-White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer.<sup>697</sup> Classified information concerning Ambassador Wilson's trip and his wife's employment at the CIA was also widely shared on Air Force One on June 10, 2003,<sup>698</sup> and on Air Force Two on July 12, 2003.<sup>699</sup>

Even more significantly, although Mr. Libby and the other members of the Administration had to know the information was classified (the Libby indictment includes numerous references that make it clear that Valerie Plame's employment at the CIA is classified),<sup>700</sup> they nevertheless widely shared this damaging information with the press. Thus, for example, before Novak's column ran, at least four Administration officials (Mr. Libby, Mr. Rove, and two still as of yet unknown Administration officials) called at least five Washington journalists (Ms. Miller, Mr. Novak, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Pincus, and Mr. Woodward) and disclosed the identity and occupation of Wilson's wife. The Libby Indictment and related accounts describes in greater detail the White House effort to stem questions surrounding the forged Niger documents by disclosing classified information to the media:

- Washington Post Assistant Managing Editor Bob Woodward testified that yet another senior Administration official told him about CIA operative Valerie Plame and her position as early as May 2005, one month before her name was disclosed.<sup>701</sup>
- "On or about June 23, 2003, Libby met with *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller. . . . In discussing the CIA's handling of Wilson's trip to Niger, Libby informed her that Wilson's wife might work at a bureau of the CIA."<sup>702</sup>
- On July 8, Libby discussed with Miller Wilson's trip and criticized the CIA reporting concerning Wilson's trip. During this discussion, Libby advised Miller of his belief that Wilson's wife worked for the CIA.<sup>703</sup>

- On or about July 10 or 11, the indictment states that Karl Rove was one of the sources who had confirmed to Robert Novak that Ambassador Wilson's wife worked for the CIA: "On or about July 10 or July 11, 2003, Libby spoke to a senior official in the White House ("Official A") who advised Libby of a conversation Official A [subsequently identified as Karl Rove] had earlier that week with columnist Robert Novak in which Wilson's wife was discussed as a CIA employee involved in Wilson's trip. Libby was advised by Official A that Novak would be writing a story about Wilson's wife."<sup>704</sup>
- On July 11, in the morning, Karl Rove had a short conversation with *Time* magazine reporter Matthew Cooper. Rove told Cooper that Wilson's wife worked for the CIA and had a hand in sending him to Niger.<sup>705</sup>
- On July 12, in the afternoon, Libby spoke by telephone to Matthew Cooper, who asked whether Libby had heard that Wilson's wife was involved in sending Wilson on the trip to Niger. Libby confirmed to Cooper, without elaboration or qualification, that he had heard this information too.<sup>706</sup>
- "On or about July 12, 2003, in the late afternoon, Libby spoke by telephone with Judith Miller of the *New York Times* and discussed Wilson's wife and that she worked at the CIA."<sup>707</sup>
- On July 12, according to press reports, an administration official who has not been identified returned a call from Walter Pincus of *The Washington Post*. The official "veered off the precise matter we were discussing and told me . . . [Ambassador Wilson's trip] was a boondoggle set up by his wife," Pincus has written.<sup>708</sup>

Contrary to the arguments of many in the Bush Administration, these disclosures to the media do not appear to have been inadvertent or merely confirming in nature. For instance, in reference to the two senior Administration officials who provided him with Valerie Plame Wilson's status as a covert operative, **Bob Novak** later admitted "I didn't dig it out, it was given to me. . . . They thought it was significant, they gave me the name and I used it."<sup>709</sup> Mr. Novak also stated on December 14, 2005, that he would be "amazed" if the president didn't know the source's identity and that the public should "bug the president as to whether he should reveal who the source is."<sup>710</sup> Also, as noted above, another administration official actually "veered" at the subject at hand to bring up Ambassador Wilson's trip and complain that it "was a boondoggle set up by Wilson's wife."<sup>711</sup> A senior source in the Administration also acknowledged that officials brought up Plame as part of their broader case against Wilson. "'It was unsolicited,' the source said. 'They were pushing back. They used everything they had.'"<sup>712</sup>

## ii. Retribution and Damage

There is also significant evidence that, in addition to leaking this classified information to deflect criticism from the President and Vice-President for their false

uranium and other nuclear claims, the Bush Administration was motivated by revenge and retribution. First, we have the stunning admission, by a Republican congressional aide, that the White House strategy with respect to Ambassador Wilson's charges was to "slime and defend."<sup>713</sup>

We also have the statement by the host of MSNBC's *Hardball*, Chris Matthews: "I just got off the phone with Karl Rove who said your wife is fair game."<sup>714</sup> We also have the statement by a senior Bush Administration official that "[the leak] was meant purely and simply for revenge."<sup>715</sup> Asked about the motive for describing the leaks, the senior official said the leaks were "wrong and a huge miscalculation, because they were irrelevant and did nothing to diminish Wilson's credibility."<sup>716</sup>

There are numerous additional sources who have indicated that revenge was a motivating factor behind the series of leaks. Vince Cannistraro, a former Chief of Operations and Analysis for the CIA's Counterterrorism Center, noted the retaliatory nature of the leak: "[Administration officials] were trying to not only undermine and trash Ambassador Wilson, but to demonstrate their contempt for CIA by bringing Valerie's name into it. Wasn't germane to their argument, but they brought it in there deliberately, vindictively in, in my judgment, a dirty trick."<sup>717</sup> Echoing this belief, former CIA Case Officer Jim Marcinkowski noted, "[T]he interest being advanced by this disclosure was certainly not national security."<sup>718</sup>

*The Los Angeles Times* reported that the "intensity with which Libby reacted to Wilson had many senior White House staffers puzzled, and few agreed with his counterattack plan, or its rationale."<sup>719</sup> An ex-Administration official said "this might have been about politics on some level, but it is also personal. [Libby] feels that his honor has been questioned, and his instinct is to strike back."<sup>720</sup>

These leaks of classified information by Bush Administration officials have damaged national security.<sup>721</sup> At his press conference on October 28, 2005, Fitzgerald stated that the leaks were "a serious breach of the public trust," and he said the disclosure of Ms. Wilson's status were a set-back to the Central Intelligence Agency and its employees, at minimum as a deterrent to the recruiting of new officers.<sup>722</sup> Numerous ex-CIA agents also have confirmed the damaging nature of these politically motivated disclosures. For example, Arthur Brown, who retired in February as the CIA's Asian Division chief and is now a senior vice president at the consultancy firm Control Risks Group, declared that "[c]over and tradecraft are the only forms of protection one has and to have that stripped away because of political scheming is the moral equivalent to exposing forward deployed military units."<sup>723</sup>

Many Republicans tried to minimize the damage by challenging Mrs. Wilson's status as a covert agent.<sup>724</sup> For example, on July 17, House Republican Whip Roy Blunt (R-MO) read from the Republican talking points and stated, "[Y]ou know, this was a job that the ambassador's wife had that she went to every day. It was a desk job. I think many people in Washington understood that her employment was at the CIA, and she went to that office every day."<sup>725</sup>

However, many former CIA agents were critical of Republican efforts to dismiss Ms. Plame's job as a non-covert desk job. Larry Johnson, a former CIA analyst, and ten other former intelligence officers wrote to congressional leaders calling the disclosure of her name a "shameful event in American history."<sup>726</sup> Citing statements by Republican allies, they stated: "[I]ntelligence officers should not be used as political footballs. In the case of Valerie Plame, she still works for the CIA and is not in a position to publicly defend her reputation and honor."<sup>727</sup> At a Democratic hearing on the leak, former intelligence officers reiterated their plea that Republicans cease their attacks on Mrs. Wilson.<sup>728</sup>

### iii. Delays, Conflicts, and More Lies

Once it became clear that someone in the Bush Administration had leaked classified information for political gain, rather than move quickly to identify and dismiss and, if necessary, prosecute the responsible parties – as had been initially promised – the Administration did the opposite. The record shows that members of the Bush Administration delayed and encumbered the investigation and engaged in even more lies and misstatements. In fact, from the very outset, the Bush Administration's handling of the leak has been rife with political and procedural irregularities.

The Department of Justice caused serious delays to the investigation by failing to pursue the allegations and by failing to obtain waivers from White House personnel in a timely manner. Initially, the Department failed to open an investigation into the leak. Immediately after Mr. Novak's piece was published, the CIA contacted the Justice Department four times in the span of three weeks to (1) notify it that the disclosure of Wilson's name and covert status probably violated the law and (2) request a criminal investigation.<sup>729</sup> On September 29, 2003, over a month after the first CIA notification, the Department finally confirmed that the FBI would investigate the leak.<sup>730</sup>

Unfortunately, the Department's handling of the case was subject to further delays and conflicts of interest. For example, the Department waited three days before notifying the White House of the investigation, and the then-White House Counsel Gonzalez in turn waited eleven hours before asking all White House staff to preserve any evidence. (Gonzales claimed that this day was approved by the Department of Justice).<sup>731</sup> Moreover, any evidence employees turned over was and continues to be screened for "relevance" by White House counsel, perhaps filtering out critical information.<sup>732</sup> One reason given for these delays was that the Department was "going a bit slower on this one because it is so high-profile,"<sup>733</sup> according to FBI sources.

In addition to causing delay, other aspects of the Department's handling of the investigation are of concern. For example, law enforcement officials close to the investigation have indicated that then-Attorney General Ashcroft was personally and

privately briefed on FBI interviews of Karl Rove, then a senior advisor to the President and now the Deputy White House Chief of Staff.<sup>734</sup> At the time of these events, Mr. Ashcroft had personal and political connections to Mr. Rove – Mr. Rove was an adviser to Mr. Ashcroft during the latter's political campaigns, earning almost \$750,000 for his services.<sup>735</sup>

Finally, on December 30, 2003, these conflicts led the Attorney General to recuse himself from the investigation. Then-Deputy Attorney General James Comey became the acting Attorney General for the matter and simultaneously appointed Patrick Fitzgerald, the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, as a special counsel to lead the investigation.<sup>736</sup>

However, even Mr. Fitzgerald's appointment did not stop the Administration's efforts to delay the investigation. Mr. Fitzgerald encountered numerous problems, including Administration officials' failure to execute waivers of privilege. For example, Mr. Libby's initial failure to execute a clear and unequivocal waiver of privilege to Judith Miller significantly delayed and impeded Mr. Fitzgerald's investigation.<sup>737</sup> Indeed, in a March 2005 filing with the court hearing the case, Mr. Fitzgerald stated he could not close the matter because of Ms. Miller's inability to testify about conversations with senior government officials.<sup>738</sup> Looking back at the investigation on the day the grand jury expired, Mr. Fitzgerald noted that witnesses had not been able to testify when subpoenas were issued in August 2004, lamenting that "we would have been here in October 2004 instead of October 2005."<sup>739</sup>

Members of the Bush Administration also have sought to coverup their own misdeeds through a series of lies and misstatements. First, the White House Press Secretary repeatedly provided false information to the American people about the leak and the investigation. At a minimum, this occurred in exchanges on September 29, 2003,<sup>740</sup> and on October 7, 2003,<sup>741</sup> which together contain at least eight falsehoods by Mr. McClellan.

With regard to Karl Rove being "involved" in the leak, Mr. McClellan asserted (i) that it was a "ridiculous suggestion"; (ii) that "it's not true"; (iii) "that he was not involved"; and (iv) "there's no truth to the suggestion that he was." With regard to whether Scooter Libby, Karl Rove, or Elliot Abrams "were the leakers," Mr. McClellan also claimed (v) it was a "ridiculous suggestion"; (vi) "it is simply not true"; (vii) "I've said its not true"; and (viii) "there is simply no truth to that suggestion. And I have spoken with Karl about it."

In addition to Mr. McClellan's false statements, Mr. Rove also made direct misstatements to the public. Asked on September 29, 2003 whether he had "any knowledge" of the leak or whether he leaked the name of the CIA agent, Rove answered "No."<sup>742</sup>

There is also clear evidence that Vice President Cheney "misspoke" on national television when he denied any knowledge of who sent Mr. Wilson to Niger. On a

September 14, 2003 appearance on *Meet the Press*, Cheney said: "I don't know Joe Wilson . . . [and have] no idea who hired him."<sup>743</sup> In point of fact, as the Libby Indictment reveals, "on or about June 12, 2003, Libby was advised by the Vice President of the United States that Wilson's wife worked at the Central Intelligence Agency in the Counterproliferation Division. Libby understood that the Vice President had learned this information from the CIA."<sup>744</sup> This clearly contradicts Cheney's statement on *Meet the Press*.

The President himself appears to have mislead the American people regarding this cover-up when, among other things, he revoked his pledge to dismiss any and all leakers from his Administration. On September 30, 2003, when President Bush was asked about the matter and Rove's involvement in it, the President flatly declared: "Listen, I know of nobody – I don't know of anybody in my administration who leaked classified information. . . . If somebody did leak classified information, I'd like to know it, and we'll take the appropriate action. And this investigation is a good thing."<sup>745</sup>

The President was even more definitive on June 10, 2004, in the middle of his re-election campaign:

Q. Do you stand by your pledge to fire anyone found to have done so?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.<sup>746</sup>

Despite these promises, on July 18, 2005, as it became increasingly clear that senior White House officials played a role in the leak, the President made it far less likely that the leakers would be subject to administrative discipline. At a press conference with the Prime Minister of India, President Bush stated, "if someone committed a crime, they will no longer work in my administration,"<sup>747</sup> a stunningly low threshold for ethics.<sup>748</sup>

#### **b. Other Instances of Bush Administration Retribution Against its Critics**

*"The White House press office is under new management and has become slightly more aggressive about contacting reporters."*<sup>749</sup>

-----July 16, 2003, Conservative Blogger Matt Drudge, describing how the Bush Administration gave him information in order to out a reporter as gay who had interviewed United States troops frustrated with the Iraq War.

Beyond the "sliming" of Ambassador Wilson, the Bush Administration appears to have engaged in a coordinated assault against numerous individuals and institutions that dared to challenge the Administration's assertions and conclusions about the Iraq war. These attacks were an apparent effort to both silence honest whistleblowers and shift focus away from the root of the problem - the Administration's wrongdoing.<sup>750</sup>



The list of persons who have suffered this fate is long, ranging from former General Shinseki, who was “sidelined for questioning the administration’s projections about needed troop strength in Iraq”<sup>751</sup>; to Jeffrey Kofman for reporting about frustrated soldiers in Iraq; to a CIA analyst named “Jerry” for ascertaining the truth about “Curveball.”

i. Former General Eric Shinseki and Others in the Military

Former General Eric Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, was punished and undermined for contradicting Donald Rumsfeld’s pre-war assessment of troop needs in Iraq. In February 2003, Shinseki presciently testified before the **Senate Armed Services Committee that the Defense Department’s troop estimate for occupying Iraq was too low and that “something on the order of several hundred thousand soldiers” would be needed.**<sup>752</sup> He further stated, “We’re talking about post-hostilities control over a piece of geography that’s fairly significant, with the kinds of ethnic tensions that could lead to other problems.”<sup>753</sup> He continued: “It takes a significant ground force presence to maintain a safe and secure environment, to ensure that people are fed, that water is distributed all the normal responsibilities that go along with administering a situation like this.”<sup>754</sup>

This, however, was very different from what the Defense Department had been telling Congress and the American public, as it had put the figure for occupation troop needs closer to 100,000 troops. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz called Shinseki’s estimate “wildly off the mark” and said “I am reasonably certain that U.S. troops will greet us as liberators, and that will help us to keep requirements down.”<sup>755</sup> Later, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld echoed these remarks, stating that “[t]he idea that it would take several hundred thousand U.S. forces I think is far off the mark”<sup>756</sup> It was also reported that in a semi-private meeting, the Pentagon’s civilian leadership told the *Village Voice* newspaper that General Shinseki’s remark was “bullshit from a Clintonite enamored of using the army for peacekeeping and not winning wars.”<sup>757</sup>

General Shinseki refused to back down from his honest – and ultimately correct – estimate. A spokesman for the General, Col. Joe Curtin, stated, “He was asked a question and he responded with his best military judgment.”<sup>758</sup> And, in another congressional hearing, General Shinseki stated that the number “could be as high as several hundred thousand. . . . We all hope it is something less.”<sup>759</sup>

In the end, General Shinseki’s comments, and his willingness to say them publicly, cost him his job worth and status. In revenge for his comments, Defense Department officials leaked the name of Shinseki’s replacement 14 months before his retirement, rendering him a lame duck commander and “embarrassing and neutralizing the Army’s top officer.”<sup>760</sup> As one person who engaged in high-level planning for both wars said, “There was absolutely no debate in the normal sense. There are only six or eight of them who make the decisions, and they only talk to each other. And if you disagree with them in public, they’ll come after you, the way

they did with Shinseki.”<sup>761</sup> Shinseki “dared to say publicly that several hundred thousand troops would be needed to occupy Iraq [and] was ridiculed by the administration and his career was brought to a close.”<sup>762</sup> Another reporter noted that “[t]his administration has a history of undermining people who raise questions. . . . Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki was publicly humiliated for suggesting it would take hundreds of thousands of troops to secure a post-Saddam Iraq.”<sup>763</sup>

A situation similar to that of General Shinseki was the retaliation against Major General John Riggs. Major General Riggs gave an interview with *The Baltimore Sun* saying the army needed at least another 10,000 soldiers because it was being stretched too thin between Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>764</sup> General George W. Casey subsequently told Riggs to “stay in your lane” and not discuss the troops.<sup>765</sup> Riggs retired and was denied his full rank, officially for “minor infractions.”<sup>766</sup> A retired Army Lieutenant General, Jay M. Garner, a one-time Pentagon adviser who ran reconstruction efforts in Iraq in 2003, commented that when Riggs made his comment about being overstretched in Iraq, the Administration “went bats . . . . The military part of [the defense secretary’s office] has been politicized. If [officers] disagree, they are ostracized and their reputations are ruined.”<sup>767</sup>

Another victim of the Administration’s attacks was Army Spc. Thomas Wilson, a 31-year-old member of a Tennessee National Guard unit. After asking Donald Rumsfeld why vehicle armor was still scarce nearly two years after the start of the war, Mr. Wilson was trashed as an insubordinate plant of the “liberal media.”<sup>768</sup>

## ii. Former Secretary of Treasury Paul O’Neill and Economic Adviser Lawrence Lindsey

Former Secretary of Treasury Paul O’Neill was punished twice by the Administration, once for opposing Bush’s tax policy, for which he was forced to resign in January 2003,<sup>769</sup> and later for providing a first hand account of the Administration’s decision-making process in the lead up to the Iraq war. In “The Price of Loyalty,” written by former *Wall Street Journal* reporter Ron Suskind, O’Neill recounts how the Administration was discussing plans for going to war in Iraq in the earliest days of Bush’s presidency, well before the September 11 attacks. He stated that Iraq was discussed at the first National Security Council meeting after Bush was inaugurated in January 2001. “From the very beginning, there was a conviction that Saddam Hussein was a bad person and that he needed to go,” O’Neill told 60 Minutes.<sup>770</sup> The only task was “finding a way to do it.”<sup>771</sup> He also stated that he never saw any credible intelligence indicating that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction.<sup>772</sup>

Before the book was published, Donald Rumsfeld called Secretary O’Neill and tried to persuade his longtime friend not to go through with the project. Rumsfeld labeled it a “sour grapes” book.<sup>773</sup> But when Mr. O’Neill went through with the book, the Administration sought to discredit him by launching an investigation into his use of classified documents and whether he shared them with 60 Minutes in his interviews.<sup>774</sup> As Paul Krugman of *The New York Times* points out, the Administration

“opened an investigation into how a picture of a possibly classified document appeared during Mr. O’Neill’s TV interview.”<sup>775</sup>

The investigation did not uncover any improprieties.<sup>776</sup> The Treasury Department’s inspector general reported that although O’Neill received the classified material after his resignation, the lapse was the fault of the department, not O’Neill.<sup>777</sup> It is noteworthy now sharply this contrast with evident lack of concern when a senior administration official, still unknown, blew the cover of a C.I.A. operative because her husband had revealed some politically inconvenient facts.”<sup>778</sup>

The Administration also sought to minimize O’Neill’s role as a high-level official and painted him to be completely out of step with reality. As one writer observed, “O’Neill’s revelations have not been met by any factual rebuttal. Instead, they have been greeted with anonymous character assassination from a ‘senior official’: ‘Nobody listened to him when he was in office. Why should anybody now?’”<sup>779</sup>

Press Secretary Scott McClellan said “We appreciate his service, but we are not in the business of doing book reviews. . . . It appears that the world according to Mr. O’Neill is more about trying to justify his own opinion than looking at the reality of the results we are achieving on behalf of the American people.”<sup>780</sup> Another senior Administration official stated, “The Treasury Secretary is not in the position to have access to that kind of information, where he can make observations of that nature . . . This is a head-scratcher.”<sup>781</sup>

The Administration also went after former senior White House economic adviser Larry Lindsey. Mr. Lindsey angered the White House in September 2002 when he made a prescient prediction that a war with Iraq would cost between \$100 billion and \$200 billion, an estimate Administration officials at the time insisted was too high. In December 2002, the White House requested that Lindsey resign from his post.<sup>782</sup> Lindsey’s estimate, of course, has proved to be on the far low side.<sup>783</sup> As Frank Rich wrote, “Lawrence Lindsey, the president’s chief economic adviser, was pushed out after he accurately projected the cost of the Iraq war.”<sup>784</sup>

### iii. Richard Clarke

The Administration personally attacked Richard Clarke, the former counterterrorism czar, for publishing a book in which he recounted how the Bush Administration was fixated on invading Iraq. Clarke’s book, “Against All Enemies: Inside the White House’s War on Terror—What Really Happened,” was published in March of 2004. Clarke, who worked for both Democrat and Republican administrations and helped shape U.S. policy on terrorism under President Reagan and the first President Bush as well as President Clinton, suggests in his book that President Bush was overly fixated on Saddam Hussein and Iraq. As a result, the President let down his guard on al Qaeda. Clarke stated that Bush’s top aides wanted to use the terrorist attacks of September 11 as an excuse to remove Saddam from power.<sup>785</sup> In an interview with CBS, Clarke recalled: “Rumsfeld was saying we needed

to bomb Iraq . . . We all said, 'but no, no, al-Qaeda is in Afghanistan.'"<sup>786</sup> Rumsfeld responded: "There aren't any good targets in Afghanistan. And there are lots of good targets in Iraq."<sup>787</sup>

Clarke also stated that his team substantively examined whether there was a connection between Iraq and the September 11 attacks. "We got together all the FBI experts, all the C.I.A. experts. We wrote the report. We sent the report out to C.I.A. and found FBI and said, 'Will you sign this report?' They all cleared the report. And we sent it up to the president and it got bounced by the National Security Advisory or Deputy. It got bounced and sent back saying, 'Wrong answer. . . . Do it again.'"<sup>788</sup>

Because of these revealing accounts, the Bush Administration went into attack mode in an attempt to discredit and smear Clarke. Dan Bartlett, White House communications director, dismissed Clarke's accounts as "politically motivated," "reckless," and "baseless."<sup>789</sup> Scott McClellan, President Bush's spokesman, portrayed Clarke as a disgruntled former employee: "Mr. Clarke has been out there talking about what title he had . . . He wanted to be the deputy secretary of the Homeland Security Department after it was created. The fact of the matter is, just a few months after that, he left the administration. He did not get that position. Someone else was appointed."<sup>790</sup> National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice alleged that: "Dick Clarke just does not know what he is talking about. He wasn't involved in most of the meetings of the Administration."<sup>791</sup> Vice President Cheney stated that Clarke "wasn't in the loop, frankly, on a lot of this stuff . . . It was as though he clearly missed a lot of what was going on."<sup>792</sup> Even Republican Majority Leader Bill Frist went after Clarke, saying "[i]n his appearance before the 9/11 commission, Mr. Clarke's theatrical apology on behalf of the nation was not his right, his privilege or his responsibility. In my view it was not an act of humility, but an act of supreme arrogance and manipulation."<sup>793</sup>

The Bush Administration's smear campaign against Clarke was widely discussed. As Joe Conason, a political commentator and journalist, stated, "[A]dministration officials have been bombarding him with personal calumny and abuse. They have called him an embittered job-seeker, a publicity-seeking author, a fabricator, a Democratic partisan and, perhaps worst of all, a friend of a friend of John Kerry."<sup>794</sup> Sidney Blumenthal noted, "The controversy raging around Clarke's book – and his testimony before the 9/11 commission that Bush ignored warnings about terrorism that might have prevented the attacks–revolves around his singularly unimpeachable credibility. In response, the Bush administration has launched a full-scale offensive against him: impugning his personal motives, claiming he is a disappointed job-hunter, that he is publicity mad, a political partisan . . . as well as ignorant, irrelevant and a liar."<sup>795</sup> The Administration's attacks were seriously questioned by those who were aware of Clarke's qualifications. One journalist described the White House's attacks as "desperate" because "for the first time since the September 11 attacks, Bush's greatest accomplishments have been credibly recast as his greatest failures."<sup>796</sup>

#### iv. Cindy Sheehan

Cindy Sheehan, founder of Gold Star Families for Peace, is the mother of Casey Sheehan, a church group leader and honor roll student who enlisted in 2000 before the September 11 attacks. At the age of 24, on April 4, 2004, Casey died in a rescue mission with six other soldiers in Sadr City. This was almost a year from the date President Bush declared "mission accomplished" in Iraq and announced the end of major combat operations.

After the death of her son, Ms. Sheehan became an active leader and participant in protesting the Iraq war. On August 6, 2005, Ms. Sheehan set up camp at President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas, asserting that she would remain there until the President agreed to meet with her to discuss the war.<sup>797</sup>

Instead of meeting with Sheehan,<sup>798</sup> the Administration and other conservative media outlets began to attack Sheehan. Columnist Maureen Dowd noted that the "Bush team tried to discredit 'Mom' by pointing reporters to an old article in which she sounded kinder to W. If only her husband were an undercover C.I.A. operative, the Bushies could out him. But even if they send out a squad of Swift Boat Moms for Truth, there will be a countering Falluja Moms for Truth."<sup>799</sup>

The attacks continued as Fred Barnes of *Fox News* labeled Sheehan a "crackpot."<sup>800</sup> Conservative blogs then started talking about Sheehan's divorce. "The right-wing blogosphere quickly spread tales of her divorce, her angry Republican in-laws, her supposed political flip-flops, her incendiary sloganeering and her association with known ticket-stub-carrying attendees of 'Fahrenheit 9/11.' Rush Limbaugh went so far as to declare that Ms. Sheehan's 'story is nothing more than forged documents - there's nothing about it that's real.'"<sup>801</sup>

The President also joined in on the attack by criticizing Sheehan as unrepresentative of most military families he meets. He labeled anti-war protestors as dangerous isolationists and stated that they advocated policies that would embolden terrorists. "An immediate withdrawal of our troops in Iraq or the broader Middle East, as some have called for, would only embolden the terrorists and create a staging ground to launch more attacks against America and free nations," he told an audience mostly made up of Idaho National Guard members.<sup>802</sup>

Commenting on these typical administration smear tactics, journalist Ahmed Amr wrote the following:

**Karl Rove has let the dogs out. A vicious campaign to maul Citizen Sheehan is in play.** Instead of answering her questions - the right wing media hacks are focusing on her motives, her mental health, her ideology and her family. These are standard and classic Rovian tactics used to smear administration critics. The predictable pundits at FOX have taken the lead by portraying Sheehan as a treasonous 'crackpot' who is exploiting the death of her son to gain fame and



fortune and advance the extremist political agenda of leftist 'anti-American' groups. Hate radio stations across the nations are assailing Cindy's integrity and questioning her patriotism.<sup>803</sup>

**v. Jeffrey Kofman**

Jeffrey Kofman, an ABC reporter, was "outed" by the Administration after giving voice to frustrated soldiers in Iraq. On July 15, 2003, one week after Donald Rumsfeld told certain troops they would be going home, Kofman covered a story in which American soldiers in Falluja described low moral in Iraq and spoke angrily of how their tour of duty had been extended yet again.<sup>804</sup> Kofman interviewed several troops who criticized President Bush and Donald Rumsfeld on camera, including Spc. Clinton Deitz, who said "If Donald Rumsfeld was here, I'd ask him for his resignation."<sup>805</sup> The story was broadcast on *ABC News World Report*, a nightly newscast anchored by Peter Jennings.<sup>806</sup> It was repeated on *Good Morning America* the next day.<sup>807</sup>

The White House retaliated, using Matt Drudge and his Drudge Report website as the vehicle. Drudge's website contained the headline: "ABC News Reporter Who Filed Troops Complaint Story – Openly Gay Canadian."<sup>808</sup> When asked about the story, Drudge pointed to the White House as his source, telling Lloyd Grove of *The Washington Post* that "someone from the White House communications shop" had given him the information.<sup>809</sup> Drudge was also reported as saying, "The White House press office is under new management and has become slightly more aggressive about contacting reporters."<sup>810</sup>

It had become standard Administration practice to discredit the messenger rather than refute the message. As columnist Frank Rich aptly stated, "the 'outing' of Mr. Kofman (who turned out to be openly gay) almost simultaneously with the outing of Ms. Plame points to a pervasive culture of revenge in the White House and offers a clue as to who might be driving it. Joshua Green reported in detail in *The Atlantic Monthly* last year, a recurring feature of Mr. Rove's political campaigns throughout his career has been the questioning of an 'opponent's sexual orientation.'"<sup>811</sup>

**vi. International Organizations—the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the IAEA**

Jose Bustani, a Brazilian diplomat and former director of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which oversees the destruction of two million chemical weapons and two-thirds of the world's chemical weapon facilities, was attacked and ultimately ousted by the Bush Administration for failing to cooperate with the Administration's decision to attack Iraq. Bustani began serving as director of OPCW in 1997 and was reelected to the position of Director-General in May 2000 for the 2001-2005 term by a unanimous vote.<sup>812</sup>



In early 2001, Bustani sought to convince Saddam Hussein to sign the chemical weapons convention, hoping that he would eventually be able to send chemical weapons inspectors to Baghdad. It was perceived by some in the Bush Administration that sending weapons inspectors to Iraq “might have helped defuse the crisis over alleged Iraqi weapons and undermined a U.S. rationale for war.”<sup>813</sup> Consequently, Undersecretary of State John Bolton and other Administration officials grew increasingly irritated with Bustani for his attempts to send inspectors to Iraq. According to Bustani himself, he received a “menacing” phone call from John Bolton in June 2001.<sup>814</sup> He elaborated in an interview with the French newspaper *Le Monde* in mid-2002, saying Bolton “tried to order me around,” and sought to have some U.S. inspection results overlooked and certain Americans hired to OPCW positions.<sup>815</sup>

When Bustani refused, Bolton apparently led a campaign to have him fired and based the campaign on Bustani purported “mismanagement” of the agency. But as one Bolton aide explicitly stated, Jose Bustani “had to go” because he was trying to send chemical weapons inspectors to Baghdad.<sup>816</sup> A former Bustani aide also noted that Bolton sought Bustani’s removal not because of mismanagement, for which Bolton offered no evidence, but because Bustani wanted to avoid war. As OPCW official Bob Rigg told the *Associated Press*: “Why did they not want OPCW involved in Iraq? They felt they couldn’t rely on OPCW to come up with the findings the U.S. wanted.”<sup>817</sup>

The Bush Administration went public with its campaign in March 2002, moving to terminate Bustani’s tenure. On the eve of an OPCW Executive Council meeting to consider the dismissal, Bolton personally met Bustani in The Hague to seek his resignation. When Bustani refused, according to Bustani, “Bolton said something like, ‘Now we’ll do it the other way,’ and walked out,” OPCW official Bob Rigg recounted.<sup>818</sup> In the Executive Council, the Bush Administration failed to win majority support among the 41 nations. In light of this failure, the Administration became more aggressive in its approach, sending envoys to the member-states of the OPCW to secure votes for his dismissal. The Administration reportedly began a smear campaign against Bustani, accusing him of “financial mismanagement,” “demoralization of his staff,” “bias,” and “ill-reputation.”<sup>819</sup>

The Bush Administration also called an unusual, special session of the OPCW member states in April 2002. Addressing the delegates, Bustani pleaded that the conference must decide whether genuine multilateralism “will be replaced by unilateralism in a multilateral disguise.”<sup>820</sup> To strongarm the member nations, the U.S. delegation suggested it would withhold U.S. dues – 22 percent of the budget – if Bustani stayed in office, stirring fears of an OPCW collapse.<sup>821</sup> With less than one-third of the member nations voting, the Bush Administration got its way and Bustani was let go. However, in a stern rebuke to the Administration, the United Nations’ highest administrative tribunal in July 2003 declared that the Bush Administration’s allegations were “extremely vague” and the dismissal was “unlawful.” It stated that

international civil servants must not be made “vulnerable to pressures and to political change.”<sup>822</sup>

The Bush Administration also sought to undermine the IAEA and its Director-General. After Jacques Baute, the head of the IAEA's Iraq inspections unit, determined that the Niger documents were fraudulent and IAEA Director-General Mohammed ElBaradei delivered Baute's conclusions to the Security Council, Vice President Cheney publicly assaulted the credibility of the organization and ElBaradei. Vice President Cheney stated on *Meet the Press*: “I think Mr. ElBaradei frankly is wrong . . . I think, if you look at the track record of the [IAEA] and this kind of issue, especially where Iraq's concerned, they have consistently underestimated or missed what it was Saddam Hussein was doing. I don't have any reason to believe they're any more valid this time than they've been in the past.”<sup>823</sup>

Beginning in late 2004, the White House made a push to oust ElBaradei from the agency. The Administration's retaliation campaign included a complete halt of intelligence-sharing with the agency, recruitment of potential replacements and eavesdropping on his calls in search of ammunition to use against ElBaradei and the IAEA.<sup>824</sup> As *The New York Times* noted, “Tensions [between the United States and the IAEA] were so sharp that agency officials said they suspected their phones, including Dr. ElBaradei's, were being wiretapped by American intelligence agencies.”<sup>825</sup> Further:

For most of the last year (2004), the Bush administration had tried to block Dr. ElBaradei from assuming a third term as chief of the agency, a part of the United Nations . . . The roots of the disagreement stretch back before the invasion of Iraq, when Dr. ElBaradei was openly skeptical of the Bush administration's accusations that Saddam Hussein had rebuilt a nuclear program. No weapons of mass destruction have since been found in Iraq.<sup>826</sup>

Mohamed ElBaradei and the IAEA were easily vindicated by the international community and ElBaradei recently won the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize for his longstanding efforts.<sup>827</sup>

#### vii. Bunnatine Greenhouse

Bunnatine Greenhouse was the chief contracting officer at the Army Corps of Engineers, the agency that has managed much of the reconstruction work in Iraq. In October 2004, Ms. Greenhouse came forward and revealed that top Pentagon officials showed improper favoritism to Halliburton when awarding military contracts to Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR).<sup>828</sup> Greenhouse stated that when the Pentagon awarded Halliburton a five-year \$7 billion contract, it pressured her to withdraw her objections, actions which she claimed were unprecedented in her experience.<sup>829</sup>

On June 27, 2005, Ms. Greenhouse testified before Congress, detailing that the contract award process was compromised by improper influence by political appointees, participation by Halliburton officials in meetings where bidding requirements were discussed, and a lack of competition.<sup>830</sup> She stated that the Halliburton contracts represented "the most blatant and improper contract abuse I have witnessed during the course of my professional career."<sup>831</sup> Days before the hearing, the acting general counsel of the Army Corps of Engineers paid Ms. Greenhouse a visit and reportedly let it be known that it would not be in her best interest to appear voluntarily.<sup>832</sup>

On August 27, 2005, the Army demoted Ms. Greenhouse, removing her from the elite Senior Executive Service and transferring her to a lesser job in the corps' civil works division.<sup>833</sup> As Frank Rich of *The New York Times* described the situation, "[H]er crime was not obstructing justice but pursuing it by vehemently questioning irregularities in the awarding of some \$7 billion worth of no-bid contracts in Iraq to the Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root."<sup>834</sup> The demotion was in apparent retaliation for her speaking out against the abuses, even though she previously had stellar reviews and over 20 years of experience in military procurement. "They went after her to destroy her," said Michael Kohn, her attorney, who added that the demotion was "absolutely" in retaliation for her complaints about the Halliburton contract.<sup>835</sup>

#### viii. The Central Intelligence Agency and its Employees

The Bush Administration also appears to have undermined and used the CIA and its analysts as a scapegoat for its own failings. In the article *The Secret Way to War*, Mark Danner describes the Administration's approach: "[Administration] officials now explain their misjudgments in going to war by blaming them on 'intelligence failures'—that is, on the intelligence that they themselves politicized."<sup>836</sup>

Among other things, the White House blamed the CIA and George Tenet for the Niger reference in the State of the Union address after the CIA had sought to modify, if not delete, the reference. "Condoleeza Rice, the national-security adviser, told a television interviewer on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 'Had there been even a peep that the agency did not want that sentence in or that George Tenet did not want that sentence . . . it would have been gone.'"<sup>837</sup> E.J. Dionne wrote:

After Tenet's hedged statement about the Niger affair, whatever trust remained between the White house and C.I.A. seemed to dissolve. Then-national security adviser Condoleeza Rice blasted Tenet personally, and the White house escalated its criticisms of the C.I.A.'s intelligence failure. Tenet was gone by early 2004.<sup>838</sup>

The CIA was also undermined when it resisted immediate endorsement of the Administration's theories about Iraq.<sup>839</sup> When the CIA did not fall in line with the Administration's assessment of a link between Iraq and al Qaeda, "administration

officials began a campaign to pressure the agency to toe the line. Perle and other members of the Defense Policy Board, who acted as quasi-independent surrogates for Wolfowitz, Cheney, and other administration advocates for war in Iraq, harshly criticized the C.I.A. in the press. The C.I.A.'s analysis of Iraq, Perle said, 'isn't worth the paper it is written on.'<sup>840</sup> In addition, the Pentagon created a special intelligence operation to offer alternative intelligence analyses to the CIA.<sup>841</sup> Secretary Rumsfeld began "publicly discussing the creation of a new Pentagon position, an undersecretary for intelligence, who would rival the C.I.A. director and diminish the authority of the agency."<sup>842</sup>

In addition, when Porter Goss replaced George Tenet as Director of the CIA, he began what one recently retired CIA official called a "political purge" of analysts in the CIA's Directorate of Intelligence.<sup>843</sup> Several senior analysts who wrote dissenting papers were among those purged. One former CIA official said, "The White House carefully reviewed the political analyses of the DI so they could sort out the apostates from the true believers."<sup>844</sup>

We also have received information of Bush Administration retaliation against two CIA officials who sought to provide accurate information regarding the Administration's inappropriate reliance on the Iraqi defector known as "Curveball"<sup>845</sup> and his alleged statements regarding mobile chemical weapons laboratories. The first is "Jerry," who led a CIA unit that went to Iraq and found Curveball's claims to be blatantly false and misleading. After he did so, he was chastised and transferred. According to *The Los Angeles Times*:

**Back home . . . Jerry was "read the riot act" and accused of "making waves" by his office director, according to the presidential commission. He and his colleague ultimately were transferred out of the weapons center. The C.I.A. was "very, very vindictive," Kay said. Soon after, Jerry got in touch with Michael Scheuer . . . "Jerry had become kind of a nonperson," Scheuer recalled of their meeting. "There was a tremendous amount of pressure on him not to say anything. Just to sit there and shut up."**<sup>846</sup>

A CIA spokeswoman confirmed the account but declined to comment further. Jerry still works at the CIA and could not be contacted for this report. His former supervisor, reached at home, said she could not speak to the media. "What was done to them was wrong," said a former Pentagon official who investigated the case for the presidential commission.<sup>847</sup>

Another victim was David Kay, head of the Iraq Survey Group, which found the Bush Administration's WMD claims to be inaccurate, including its reliance on Curveball:

**In December 2003, Kay flew back to C.I.A. headquarters. He said he told Tenet that Curveball was a liar and he was convinced Iraq had no mobile labs or other illicit weapons. C.I.A. officials confirm their exchange. Kay**

said he was assigned to a windowless office without a working telephone. On Jan. 20, 2004, Bush lauded Kay and the Iraq Survey Group in his State of the Union Speech for finding “weapons of mass destruction-related program activities. . . . Had we failed to act, the dictator’s weapons of mass destruction program would continue to this day.” Kay quit three days later and went public with his concerns.<sup>848</sup>

Finally, others in the CIA have suffered retaliation for criticizing the Administration or calling into question the validity or wisdom of the war. For example, in spring 2001, “an informant told the CIA that Iraq had abandoned a major element of its nuclear weapons program.”<sup>849</sup> However, according to a CIA officer, the agency did not share the information with other agencies or with senior policy makers.<sup>850</sup> The officer, an employee for the agency for more than 20 years, including several years in intelligence related to illicit weapons, was fired in 2004.<sup>851</sup> In his lawsuit, the officer states that his dismissal was punishment for his reports questioning the agency’s assumptions on a series of weapons-related matters and with the agency’s intelligence conclusions.<sup>852</sup>

### c. Ongoing Lies, Deceptions and Manipulations

Another means by which the Bush Administration has sought to cover up and obscure its initial misstatements about the Iraq war is through additional and ongoing misinformation and manipulation concerning the status of the war,<sup>853</sup> including the efficacy of the occupation, the costs of the war to our nation, and the war’s impact on terrorism.

The Bush Administration has even sought to alter its justification for the war after the fact, and to assert that weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq.

#### i. Efficacy of the Occupation

From the very outset, the Bush Administration sought to convince the American public that the Iraq occupation would be an unmitigated success. Most famously, on May 1, 2003, President Bush landed aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln, and standing beneath a massive banner reading “Mission Accomplished,” declared, “In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed,” and “major combat operations in Iraq have ended.”<sup>854</sup>

In addition, the Bush Administration has consistently underestimated the size, intensity and strength of the Iraqi insurgency, and overestimated the abilities of the Iraqis to defend themselves. Thus, for example on June 18, 2003, when asked at a Pentagon press conference about the Iraqi resistance, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld described it as “small elements” of 10 to 20 people, not large military formations or networks of attackers, and observed that “in those regions where pockets of dead-enders are trying to reconstitute, Gen. [Tommy] Franks and his team are rooting them

out. In short, the coalition is making good progress.”<sup>855</sup> More than two years later, on June 20, 2005, Vice President Cheney stated, in a CNN interview, **“The level of activity that we see today from a military standpoint, I think, will clearly decline. I think they’re in the last throes, if you will, of the insurgency.”**<sup>856</sup>

With regard to Iraqi troop capabilities, on March 14, 2004, Donald Rumsfeld stated: “We’re making very good progress with respect to the Iraqi security forces. We’re up to over 200,000 Iraqis that have been trained and equipped, and are deployed and out providing security . . . [t]he essential service work is going forward, and so, too, the governance.”<sup>857</sup> As recently as October 4, 2005, the President emphasized progress in Iraqi troop preparation and claimed there were about **“30 Iraqi battalions in the lead.”**<sup>858</sup>

The reality is far different. On June 1, 2003, former Army Secretary James White said defense officials are “unwilling to come to grips” with the scale of U.S. involvement in Iraq.<sup>859</sup> “This is not what they were selling’ (before the war) . . . It’s almost a question of people not wanting to ‘fess up’ to the notion that we will be there a long time and they might have to set up a rotation and sustain it for the long term.”<sup>860</sup> Former military officials have acknowledged their growing frustration with a war that they feel was not properly planned by the Bush Administration. General Anthony Zinni, now retired, has said:

There has been poor strategic thinking in this . . . [t]here has been poor operational planning and execution on the ground. And to think that we are going to ‘stay the course,’ the course is headed over Niagara Falls. I think it’s time to change course a bit, or at least hold somebody responsible for putting you on this course. Because it’s been a failure.<sup>861</sup>

A recently retired four-star general admitted that “[w]e’re good at fighting armies, but we don’t know how to do this. We don’t have enough intelligence analysts working on this problem.”<sup>862</sup>

As for the number of combat-ready Iraqi troops, less than a week before the President’s speech stating there were 30 Iraqi battalions, **his own commanders testified that the number of Iraqi battalions capable of fighting unaided had dropped from 3 to 1.**<sup>863</sup> Moreover, according to *The New York Times*, a recently “declassified Pentagon assessment” explained that “half of Iraq’s new police battalions are still being established and cannot conduct operations, while the other half of the police units and two-thirds of the new army battalions are only ‘partially capable’ of carrying out counterinsurgency missions, and only with American help. . . . Only ‘a small number’ of Iraqi security forces are cable of fighting the insurgency without American assistance, while about one-third of the army is capable of ‘planning, executing and sustaining counterinsurgency operations’ with allied support.”<sup>864</sup>

The Bush Administration has even gone so far as to repeatedly take credit for killing or capturing al-Zarqawi’s second in command when, in reality, “New York’s



Daily News would quickly report, the man in question 'may not even be one of the top 10 or 15 leaders.' By one analysis, 33 so-called 'top lieutenants' of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi who have been captured, killed or identified in the past two and a half years, with no deterrent effect on terrorist violence in Iraq, Madrid or London."<sup>865</sup>

The Bush Administration has also repeatedly taken to highlighting turning points in the occupation, which unfortunately has never proved true. "We have long since lost count of all the historic turning points and fast-evaporating victories hyped by this president. The toppling of Saddam's statue, 'Mission Accomplished,' the transfer of sovereignty and the purple fingers all blur into a hallucinatory loop of delusion. One such red-letter day, some may dimly recall, was the adoption of the previous, interim constitution in March 2004, also proclaimed a 'historic milestone' by Mr. Bush. Within a month after that fabulous victory, the insurgency boiled over into the war we have today, taking, among many others, the life of Casey Sheehan."<sup>866</sup>

At the same time, the Bush Administration has over-promised the extent and benefits of Iraqi reconstruction. For example, in 2003, the Bush Administration asked Congress to appropriate over \$20 billion for Iraqi reconstruction efforts and promised the funds would be used to restore oil production to pre-war levels, increase electricity production substantially above pre-war levels, and provide drinking water to 90% of Iraqis.<sup>867</sup>

Again, the reality has proven starkly different. Representative Waxman has found that "[o]il production remains below pre-war levels, electricity production is unreliable and well below the goal of 6,000 megawatts of peak electricity output, and a third of Iraqis still lack access to potable water. Billions of taxpayer dollars have been spent, but there is little to show for the expenditures in Iraq."<sup>868</sup>

An analysis by *USA Today*, based in part on an Office of Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction Report also found rampant waste, fraud and diversion of reconstruction funds:

Congress appropriated \$ 18.4 billion for Iraq reconstruction in November 2003, but last year nearly \$5 billion of it was diverted to help train and equip Iraq's security forces as the Insurgency grew in strength. . . . **And the security costs keep increasing. Originally estimated at 9% of total project costs, security costs have risen to between 20% and 30%, says Brig. Gen. William McCoy Jr., commander of the Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq. . . . Rebuilding it has proved tougher than first envisioned. Nearly half of all of Iraqi households still don't have access to clean water, and only 8% of the country, excluding the capital, is connected to sewage networks. . . . Besides escalating security costs, reconstruction also has been dogged by allegations of fraud and mismanagement. Nearly \$100 million in Iraqi funds distributed by the Coalition Provisional Authority for reconstruction was either spent without supporting receipts or vanished.**<sup>869</sup>

In its headlong efforts to convince Americans of the occupation's success, the Bush Administration has taken several steps to insure that only positive stories come out of Iraq. Thus, on March 19, 2003, the Bush Administration issued a directive forbidding news coverage of "deceased military personnel returning to or departing from" air bases.<sup>870</sup> On the other hand, the Administration has recently opted to publicize insurgent death tolls. *The Washington Post* reported on October 24, 2005: "Eager to demonstrate success in Iraq, the U.S. military has abandoned its previous refusal to publicize enemy body counts and now cites such numbers periodically to show the impact of some counterinsurgency operations . . . a practice discredited during the Vietnam War."<sup>871</sup>

Also, on October 12, 2005, the Bush Administration went so far as to pre-stage and pre-script an event with 10 American soldiers to tout the occupation's successes, including a soldier whose responsibility included public affairs and press.<sup>872</sup> According to press accounts, Allison Barber, Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Internal Communication, could be heard asking one soldier before the start:

[T]he president is going to ask you some questions. And he may ask all six of them, he may ask three of them, he might have such a great time talking to you, he might come up with some new questions . . . So what we want to be prepared for is to not, not stutter. So if there's a questions that the president comes up with that we haven't drilled through today, and I'm expecting the microphone to go right back to you, Captain Kennedy and you to handle.<sup>873</sup>

On November 30, 2005, *The LA Times* first reported that the U.S. military was secretly paying Iraqi media outlets to run stories prepared by the Pentagon.<sup>874</sup> Under this program, described as "extensive, costly, and hidden,"<sup>875</sup> the DOD has paid the Lincoln Group some \$100 million to place more than 1,000 articles in the Iraqi and Arab press. Concerning this program, a senior Pentagon official stated "Here we are trying to create the principles of democracy in Iraq. Every speech we give in that country is about democracy. And we're breaking all the first principles of democracy when we're doing it."<sup>876</sup> Colonel Jack N. Summe, the then commander of the Fourth Psychological Operations Group, also admitted: "We call our stuff information and the enemy's propaganda ... [even in the Pentagon] some public affairs professionals see us unfavorably as for propaganda ... as lying, dirty tricksters."<sup>877</sup> (This was disclosed at the same time that Scott McClellan stated the U.S. is "a leader when it comes to promoting and advocating a free and independent media around the world."<sup>878</sup>)

This Pentagon propaganda program has its roots in the Pentagon's "Office of Strategic Influence," formed in the Pentagon after the September 11 attacks, which was disbanded in February 2002 after it was planning "to provide news items, possibly even false ones, to foreign news organizations."<sup>879</sup> Later in 2002, Secretary Rumsfeld told the media he gave them a "corpse" by closing the Office of Strategic

Influence, but he intended to “keep doing every single thing that needs to be done.”<sup>880</sup>

As Mr. Rumsfeld predicted, the Pentagon has continued to engage these controversial foreign propaganda activities, outsourcing to groups such as the Lincoln Group,<sup>881</sup> the Rendon Group, and Ahmad Chalabi’s INC Information Collection Program (which provided false information regarding Iraq’s WMD Program).<sup>882</sup>

Beginning November 30, 2005, and continuing through the date of this report, President Bush has given a series of speeches outlining the plan to win the Iraq War. The speeches included several falsehoods and half truths. For example, Mr. Bush claimed Iraqi troops control major areas of Iraq, but this is true only if you include militias with no particular loyalty to the Iraqi government.<sup>883</sup> Mr. Bush also trumpeted the lead role of Iraqi battalions in fighting the insurgents, highlighting the claim that in Tal Afar “the assault was primarily led by Iraqi security forces – 11 Iraqi battalions backed by 5 coalition battalions providing support.” In reality, as *Times’* Michael Ware, who was embedded with U.S. troops during the battle explained, “I was with Iraqi units right there on the front line as they were battling with Al Qaeda. They were not leading.”<sup>884</sup> Even the president’s claim that the so-called “National Strategy for Victory in Iraq” that he released as a supposedly “declassified” version of the Administration’s plan to win the war since its inception in 2003 proved false. In reality, as *The New York Times* found, the electronic version of the document was prepared by Peter Feaver, a Duke public opinion expert who has only been advising the National Security Council since June of 2005.<sup>885</sup>

## ii. Cost of the War and Occupation

The Bush Administration is also guilty of severely underestimating the costs of the war and occupation, in terms of lives expenditures, and in its impact on our armed forces. For example, in December 2002, administration officials estimated the cost of the war to be in the range of \$50 to \$60 billion.<sup>886</sup> In fact, in 2003, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz said Iraq’s oil revenues “could bring between \$50 and \$100 billion over the course of the next two or three years . . . [w]e’re dealing with a country that can really finance its own reconstruction, and relatively soon,” he told a House committee.<sup>887</sup>

In terms of financial costs, the reality goes well beyond the more than \$277 billion already appropriated for the war.<sup>888</sup> When taking into account weapon replacement costs, veterans’ benefits and deficit financing, one budget expert pegged the costs as \$1 trillion.<sup>889</sup> Basic running costs of the current conflicts are \$6 billion a month. Factors keeping costs high include almost exclusive reliance on expensive private contractors, costs for military personnel serving second and third deployments, extra pay for reservists and members of the National Guard, as well as more than \$2 billion a year in additional foreign aid to reward cooperation in Iraq. The bill for repairing and replacing military hardware is \$20 billion a year, according to figures from the Congressional Budget Office.<sup>890</sup> But the biggest long-term costs

are disability and health payments for returning troops, which will be incurred even if hostilities were to stop tomorrow, these payments are likely to run at \$7 billion a year for the next 45 years.<sup>891</sup>

### iii. Ongoing Deceptions Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Decision to Go to War

The Bush Administration has also disseminated a series of confusing if not outright deceptive statements concerning why the nation went to war and the status of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

For example, on June 15, 2005, when asked about the veracity of the July 23, 2002 Downing Street Minutes, President Bush argued, "Nothing could be farther from the truth . . . Both of us didn't want to use our military. Nobody wants to commit military into combat. It's the last option."<sup>892</sup>

As noted above, the President has refused to respond to a letter from Representative Conyers and 121 other Members of Congress, and more than 500,000 Americans, asking him to respond to the charges inherent in the Downing Street Minutes.<sup>893</sup>

The Bush Administration also stubbornly insisted that there were weapons of mass destruction even though none were found in Iraq. On May 29, 2003, President Bush declared that "we found the weapons of mass destruction,"<sup>894</sup> and on July 17, 2003, he repeated, "[w]e ended the threat from Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction."<sup>895</sup> Similar misstatements were made by Secretary Powell, Secretary Rumsfeld and Vice President Cheney. For example, on March 30, 2003, just days after the invasion, Secretary Rumsfeld appeared on an *ABC News* segment and stated, "We know where [the WMDs] are."<sup>896</sup>

The truth of course is that no weapons of mass destruction have been found. The Iraq Survey Group has concluded that it was unlikely that chemical or biological stockpiles existed prior to the war. As Dr. David Kay testified: "I'm personally convinced that there were not large stockpiles of newly produced weapons of mass destruction. We don't find the people, the documents or the physical plants that you would expect to find if the production was going on."<sup>897</sup>

The Bush Administration also untruthfully claimed that there was no disagreement as to whether Iraq was attempting to reconstitute its nuclear weapons program or whether the President should include that claim in his 2003 State of the Union. For instance, on July 13, 2003, Dr. Rice stated "[H]ad there been even a peep that [the CIA] did not want that sentence in or that George Tenet did not want that sentence in, that the Director of Central Intelligence did not want it in, it would have been gone."<sup>898</sup> The CIA, however, sent two memoranda to the National Security Council, then headed by Dr. Rice, that warned the claim was specious.<sup>899</sup>

Also, the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research noted in the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate that the claim was "highly dubious."<sup>900</sup>

The Bush Administration also sought to convince the American public that its rationale for war was the existence of weapons of mass destruction "programs," despite the fact that before the war the Administration was claiming the justification was – links to the September 11 attacks and weapons of mass destruction. Thus, after he could no longer credibly assert that weapons of mass destruction were in Iraq, he claimed that had "we failed to act, the dictator's weapons of mass destruction programs would continue to this day."<sup>901</sup> Dick Cheney, in interviews with *USA Today* and the *Los Angeles Times*, perpetuated this bait and switch tactic – last year "weapons," this year "programs" – observing that "the jury's still out" on whether Iraq had WMD and that "I am a long way at this stage from concluding that somehow there was some fundamental flaw in our intelligence."<sup>902</sup>

The Bush Administration later sought to drop the weapons of mass destruction rationale entirely and substitute entirely new justifications. As *The Washington Post* summarized, "As the search for weapons in Iraq continues without success, the Bush Administration has moved to emphasize a different rationale for the war against Saddam Hussein: using Iraq as the 'linchpin' to transform the Middle East and thereby reduce the terrorist threat to the United States. President Bush, who has stopped talking about Iraq's weapons, said . . . that 'the rise of a free and peaceful Iraq is critical to the stability of Middle East, and a stable Middle East is critical to the security of the American people.'"<sup>903</sup> Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz, after a trip to Iraq, said flat out, "I'm not concerned about weapons of mass destruction . . . I'm concerned about getting Iraq on its feet. I didn't come [to Iraq] on a search for weapons of mass destruction."<sup>904</sup> On April 13, 2004, the President went so far as arguing that we need to stay in Iraq to ensure that those who have already lost their lives there did not die in vain: "[O]ne of the things that's very important . . . is to never allow our youngsters to die in vain. And I made that pledge to their parents. Withdrawing from the battlefield of Iraq would be just that. And it's not going to happen under my watch."<sup>905</sup>

The Bush Administration's hurried – and incorrect – claims regarding alleged Iraqi mobile chemical weapons laboratories found in April and early May 2003 is illustrative. At that time, the CIA and DIA issued a report stating that the trailers were for making biological weapons and dismissed claims by senior Iraqi scientists that the trailers were used to make hydrogen for the weather balloons that were then used in artillery practice.<sup>906</sup> Although intelligence experts disputed the purpose of these trailers, senior administration officials, including Colin Powell, repeatedly asserted that the trailers were mobile biological weapons laboratories. On May 22, 2003, Secretary Powell said, "So far, we have found the biological weapons vans that I spoke about when I presented the case to the United Nations on the 5th of February, and there is no doubt in our minds now that those vans were designed for only one purpose, and that was to make biological weapons."<sup>907</sup>



The reality is, in August 2003, *The New York Times* reported that a majority of engineers from the DIA concluded in June that the vehicles were likely used to chemically produce hydrogen for artillery weather balloons, as the Iraqis had claimed.<sup>908</sup> Their work had not been completed at the time of the CIA/DIA paper.

[A] government official from a different agency said the issue of the trailers had prompted deep divisions within the Defense intelligence Agency. The official said members of the engineering team had been angry that the agency issued the joint white paper with the CIA before their own work was completed.<sup>909</sup>

The analysts of other agencies had also come to this conclusion. A former senior intelligence official reported that “only one of 15 intelligence analysts assembled from three agencies to discuss the issue in June endorsed the white paper conclusion.”<sup>910</sup>

An official British investigation has also concluded that the trailers were not mobile germ warfare laboratories, but were actually for the production of hydrogen gas.<sup>911</sup> The Iraq Survey Group confirmed these accounts, according to Dr. Kay’s January 28, 2004, testimony: “[T]he consensus opinion is that when you look at these two trailers, while [they] had capabilities in many areas, their actual intended use was not for the production of biological weapons.”<sup>912</sup> Dr. Kay also explained that the trailers “were actually designed to produce hydrogen for weather balloons, or perhaps to produce rocket fuel.”<sup>913</sup>

In their comprehensive investigation concerning chemical weapons claims in Iraq, *The Los Angeles Times* also found that many U.S. and foreign officials believed the Bush Administration’s assertions regarding the two trucks were not well-founded: Bio-weapons experts in the intelligence community were sharply critical.<sup>914</sup> A former senior official of the State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research called the unclassified report an unprecedented “rush to judgment.”<sup>915</sup> The DIA then ordered a classified review of the evidence. One of 15 analysts held to the initial finding that the trucks were built for germ warfare.<sup>916</sup> The sole believer was the CIA analyst who helped draft the original White Paper.<sup>917</sup> Hamish Killip, a former British army officer and biological weapons expert, flew to Baghdad in July 2003 as part of the Iraq Survey Group, the CIA-led Iraqi weapons hunt<sup>918</sup>. He inspected the truck trailers and was immediately skeptical:

“The equipment was singularly inappropriate” for biological weapons, he said. “We were in hysterics over this. You’d have better luck putting a couple of dust bins on the back of the truck and brewing it in there.”<sup>919</sup> The trucks were built to generate hydrogen, not germs, he said. But the CIA refused to back down. In March 2004, Killip quit, protesting that the CIA was covering up the truth. Rod Barton, an Australian intelligence officer and another bio-weapons expert, also quit over what he said was the CIA’s refusal to admit error.<sup>920</sup>



The Bush Administration also continues to refuse to accept responsibility for false claims regarding aluminum tubes and links between al Qaeda and Iraq. When *The New York Times* asked officials in the White House about false claims concerning the tubes, they offered two rationalizations: "First, they said they had relied on the repeated assurances of George J. Tenet, then the director of central intelligence, that the tubes were in fact for centrifuges. Second, they noted that the intelligence community, including the Energy Department, largely agreed that Mr. Hussein had revived his nuclear program."<sup>921</sup> The irony is that the Administration is now blaming the CIA for these falsehoods even though it was the Administration that pressured the CIA and cherry-picked information to reach these conclusions. Moreover, the claim that the Energy Department countenanced this propaganda is untenable given that experts at the Department had thoroughly rebutted the aluminum tube claims. As one Energy Department advisor, Dr. Houston G. Wood III, stated, "I was **really shocked** in 2002 when I saw [the centrifuge claim] was still there . . . I thought it had been put to bed."<sup>922</sup>

As for the proposed meeting between Mohammed Atta and Iraqi intelligence, Vice President Cheney refused to acknowledge his misstatements. In June 2004, he stated that **"we just don't know whether the meeting took place."**<sup>923</sup> Similarly, when Gloria Borger interviewed the Vice President on CNBC about his earlier claim, Mr. Cheney denied three times that he had ever said it had been **"pretty well confirmed,"**<sup>924</sup> even though he had used those precise words on *Meet the Press*, on December 9, 2001.<sup>925</sup>

The President has also attempted to assert that notwithstanding the Administration's unique access to intelligence information, it was not alone in believing Iraq's weapons of mass destruction somehow justified preemptive war. This argument was proffered as early as February 17, 2004, when the President asserted: "My administration looked at the intelligence information, and we saw a danger. Members of Congress looked at the same intelligence, and they saw a danger. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a danger."<sup>926</sup> And as recently as November 2005, while asserting he had been exonerated by the Robb-Silberman Commission and Senate Intelligence Committee. The President expanded the field of those who had believed Iraq had weapons of mass destruction to include both former President Clinton and foreign governments.<sup>927</sup>

The truth, however, is that the Administration has access to far greater information than Congress – including the President's daily brief – and Congress is totally reliant on the Administration for intelligence manipulation, much of which cannot be discussed. As for the charges about the Clinton Administration and foreign governments, the information provided to President Clinton regarding Iraq would have been several years out of date; while foreign governments not only had differing information, but this information was completely at odds with what the Bush Administration was saying. As *The New York Times* wrote,

Mr. Clinton looked at the data and concluded that inspections and pressure were working - a view we now know was accurate. France, Russia, and Germany said war was not justified. Even Britain admitted later that there had been no evidence about Iraq, just new politics.<sup>928</sup>

As for the assertions of exoneration by independent reviews, the Senate Intelligence Committee has not yet conducted a review of pre-war intelligence information, while Judge Silberman wrote as follows when he issued his report: "Our executive order did not direct us to deal with the use of intelligence by policymakers, and all of us were agreed that that was not part of our inquiry."<sup>929</sup>

#### iv. Impact of the Iraq War on Terrorism

The Bush Administration has also attempted to convince the American public that the Iraq war has succeeded in bringing about a decline in terrorism. On October 6, 2005, the President flatly rejected the idea that "extremism" had been "strengthened" by the ongoing U.S. war in Iraq, taking strong issue with analysts who believe that Iraq has become a "melting pot for jihadists from around the world, a training group and an indoctrination center" for a new generation of terrorists, as the State Department's annual report on terrorism put it this year.<sup>930</sup>

Again, the reality is far different. As a matter of fact, there have been twice as many terrorist attacks outside Iraq in the three years after the September 11 tragedy than in the three years before.<sup>931</sup> Roger W. Cressey, formerly a White House counter-terrorism adviser under both President Bush and Clinton, has said, "To say [the] Iraq [war] has not contributed to the rise of global Sunni extremism movement is delusional. We should have an honest discussion about what these unintended consequences of Iraq war are and what do we do to counter them."<sup>932</sup> Retired Army General, Lt. General William Odom, has stated, the invasion of Iraq was the "greatest strategic disaster in the United States history," that the war alienated America's Middle East allies, making it harder to prosecute a war against terrorists.<sup>933</sup>

#### **5. Thwarting Congress and the American Public: The Death of Accountability under the Bush Administration and the Republican-Controlled Congress**

Both the Bush Administration and the Republican-controlled Congress have made it difficult if not impossible for Democrats or the American people to obtain meaningful information or oversight concerning the various abuses and misuse of power described in this Report.

##### a. Determination to Go to War Without Congressional Authorization

*"The decline of oversight hearings on Capitol Hill reflects what many of the commentators called a loss of institutional pride in Congress. Majority Republicans see themselves first and foremost as members of the Bush team -- and do not want to make trouble by asking hard questions."*

-----September 4, 2005, David Broder, Washington Post<sup>934</sup>

With regard to the charges that the Bush Administration made a decision to go to war well before seeking congressional authorization, the Administration and congressional Republicans have rejected or ignored every request to obtain information on this matter. This includes efforts to obtain information by letter, through hearings, and by way of Resolution of Inquiry.<sup>935</sup>

Numerous letter requests have been ignored by the Administration. For example, on May 5, 2005, Representative Conyers and 89 other Members wrote to the President asking him five questions:

1. Do you or anyone in your Administration dispute the accuracy of the leaked document?
2. Were arrangements being made, including the recruitment of allies, before you sought Congressional authorization [to] go to war? Did you or anyone in your Administration obtain Britain's commitment to invade prior to this time?
3. Was there an effort to create an ultimatum about weapons inspectors in order to help with the justification for the war as the minutes indicate?
4. At what point in time did you and Prime Minister Blair first agree it was necessary to invade Iraq?
5. Was there a coordinated effort with the U.S. intelligence community and/or British officials to 'fix' the intelligence and facts around the policy as the leaked document states?<sup>936</sup>

To date, no response has been received.<sup>937</sup> In addition to the congressional letter, on June 16, 2005, more than 500,000 citizens joined in this request for information from the President, which Representative Conyers and several other Members hand delivered to the White House. Again, there has been no response.

Also, on May 31, 2005, Representative Conyers wrote a letter to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld requesting a response to reports that British and U.S. aircraft increased the rate of bombing Iraq in 2002 to provoke an excuse for war.<sup>938</sup> The Defense Department did respond to this letter, although it failed to answer the specific questions posed and thus provided no meaningful information.<sup>939</sup>

In addition, Democrats submitted a request for hearings to the various committees of jurisdiction to seek oversight of these serious charges. On June 30, 2005, 52 members formally requested that the House Committees on Judiciary, Armed Services, International Relations, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence commence hearings on the Downing Street Minutes.<sup>940</sup> None of the

committee chairs responded to this letter. Similarly, on June 22, 2005, Senator Kerry and other Senators urged the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence to investigate pre-war intelligence failures, noting that the “committee’s efforts have taken on renewed urgency given recent revelations in the United Kingdom regarding the apparent minutes of a July 23, 2002, meeting between Prime Minister Tony Blair and his senior national security advisors.”<sup>941</sup> In a convoluted response, Senator Pat Roberts indicated that “the opinions of a British government official as expressed in the ‘Downing Street Memo’ are not pertinent to the Committee’s inquiry on Iraq.”<sup>942</sup>

The Administration has also been elusive in response to Democratic attempts to obtain answers through the Freedom of Information Act. On June 30, 2005, Representative Conyers and 51 other members of Congress submitted several FOIA requests to the Administration, seeking any and all documents and materials concerning the Downing Street Minutes and the lead up to the Iraq war.<sup>943</sup> The Administration responded with delays and is seeking in excess of \$100,000 to even process the request.<sup>944</sup>

Democrats have also proposed seeking information via a non-binding request for information known as a “Resolution of Inquiry.” Congresswoman Barbara Lee and 26 cosponsors filed a resolution requiring the White House and State Department to “transmit all information relating to communication with officials of the United Kingdom between January 1, 2002, and October 16, 2002, relating to the policy of the United States with respect to Iraq.”<sup>945</sup> Instead of permitting the Resolution to come to the House floor for an up or down vote, the Republicans denied a vote on the measure by sending it to the International Relations Committee, where the Resolution was defeated by a 22-21 vote.<sup>946</sup>

#### b. Manipulation of the Intelligence to Justify the War

The Administration has failed to address the most important questions regarding the manipulation of intelligence to justify the war in Iraq. Democrats in the House and Senate have attempted to hold the Administration accountable with letters, requests for independent investigations, requests for congressional oversight, and the introduction of Privileged Resolutions and Resolutions of Inquiry. On every occasion, however, the Administration and the Republican leadership have restricted access to information, tied the hands of investigators, and rejected oversight attempts.

Democrats first sought answers by writing letters to the Administration. Representative Waxman, for example, has sent numerous letters seeking information about officials’ knowledge of false nuclear claims and any efforts to mislead the public, including two to National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice,<sup>947</sup> one to Secretary of State Colin Powell,<sup>948</sup> and two to the President.<sup>949</sup> In general, the Administration’s responses to these letters, or lack thereof, have been wholly inadequate.<sup>950</sup>

Democrats have also asked for independent reviews. For example, on February 2, 2004, House Minority Leader Pelosi, Senate Minority Leader Daschle, Senators Rockefeller and Lieberman and Representative Waxman called for a congressionally appointed commission to examine the intelligence used to justify the Iraq war.<sup>951</sup> The Republican majority has ignored this request.

In addition, Democrats have sought meaningful congressional oversight, particularly once it became apparent that the Senate Intelligence Committee under Chairman Roberts did not intend to investigate whether the Bush Administration used and exaggerated the faulty intelligence.<sup>952</sup> In response, Democrats wrote several letters demanding the investigation take place. For example, Senator Jay Rockefeller, Ranking Member on the Intelligence Committee, said in a statement that he expected Phase II to be completed: "The Chairman agreed to this investigation and I fully expect him to fulfill his commitment."<sup>953</sup> And Senator Feinstein wrote a letter to Senator Roberts in July 2005, stating: "I am increasingly dismayed by the delay in completing the Committee's 'Phase II' investigation into intelligence prior to the Iraq War."<sup>954</sup> However, it was not until Senator Reid forced a closed session of the Senate on November 1, 2005 – a tactic not employed for six years – that Senator Roberts finally agreed to complete Phase II of the investigation, although it is still unclear whether the review will be meaningful.<sup>955</sup>

In the House, Representative Jane Harman, Ranking Member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, sought a formal investigation into the following aspects of pre-war intelligence: (1) the pressure felt by intelligence professionals to conform their analysis to policy judgments of the Administration; (2) the presentation of competing, differing, or dissenting views; (3) the conduct of intelligence professionals in response to statements by policymakers that purported to characterize intelligence; and (4) the development of public presentations purported to be based on intelligence.<sup>956</sup> During a press conference on November 10, 2005 and in a letter on that same date, Chairman Peter Hoekstra flatly rejected Harman's request to commence an investigation into the manipulation of pre-war intelligence.<sup>957</sup>

Democrats have also requested hearings. Congressman Henry Waxman, for example, requested hearings in the Government Reform Committee<sup>958</sup> and the Intelligence Committee<sup>959</sup> concerning issues of intelligence manipulation. Similarly, Congressman Nadler requested hearings in the Judiciary Committee to discuss whether the Administration manipulated intelligence in order to make a case for war.<sup>960</sup> These requests have been ignored by all three Republican Chairmen.

Democrats have also attempted to gain information by use of Privileged Resolutions and Resolutions of Inquiry. Leader Pelosi offered a Privileged Resolution in early November that called for "the Republican Leadership and Chairmen of the committees of jurisdiction to comply with their oversight responsibilities, demand[ed] they conduct a thorough investigation of abuses relating to the Iraq War, and condemn[ed] their refusal to conduct oversight of an Executive Branch controlled by



the same party, which is in contradiction to the established rules of standing committees and Congressional precedent."<sup>961</sup> Pelosi explained that the resolution was necessary because the House was faced with, among other things, a "Republican Leadership and Committee Chairmen [who] have repeatedly denied requests by Democratic Members to complete an investigation of pre-war intelligence on Iraq and have ignored the question of whether that intelligence was manipulated for political purposes."<sup>962</sup> The resolution was tabled by a party line vote of 220-191.<sup>963</sup>

In addition, Representatives Hinchey, Waxman, and Conyers introduced a resolution on November 10, 2005, that would require the White House to provide Congress with all drafts and documents related to the crafting of the State of the Union address.<sup>964</sup> The resolution also sought drafts and related documents surrounding the October 2002 speech given by President Bush in which he discussed a possible mushroom cloud from an Iraqi nuclear weapon.<sup>965</sup> The Resolution was referred to the Committee on International Relations and was considered on December 9, 2005. The Committee deadlocked in a 24-to-24 tie vote when one Republican, Representative Leach of Iowa, voted in its favor and two other Republicans missed the vote. However, the Chairman of the Committee scheduled another vote for the following week and the Resolution was finally defeated on December 5, 2005 by a 24-19 vote.<sup>966</sup>

### c. Encouraging and Countenancing Torture

In May 2004, the world was shocked when photos of torture and humiliation of Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib prison were leaked to the press. Since then, Democrats have been trying to obtain information through requests for hearings and documents, requests for independent reviews and commissions, and Resolutions of Inquiry. Democrats, however, have been stonewalled at every turn.

Democrats began by asking the relevant committee chairmen to conduct hearings and investigations. After it became apparent that the House Armed Services Committee would not conduct a full and complete investigation, on June 17, 2004, Congressman Conyers and other Democratic Members of the House Judiciary Committee wrote to Chairman Sensenbrenner asking that the Committee "formally request from the Administration all executive branch memoranda, orders, and rules analyzing and implementing the Geneva Conventions, the 1994 Convention Against Torture, customary international law on torture, and federal torture statutes as they apply to detainees in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Guantanamo Bay."<sup>967</sup> Chairman Sensenbrenner did not reply. In addition, Representative Waxman requested that the Government Reform Committee hold hearings about allegations that private contractors participated in torture of Iraqi detainees.<sup>968</sup> No response was received.

After Democrats were rebuffed by the relevant committees, the Ranking Members of six committees wrote a letter to the President requesting that he provide assistance in obtaining key documents concerning torture and other alleged abuse.<sup>969</sup>



In the letter, Democrats listed 35 items of documents that are needed to conduct a full and transparent investigation. The President never responded.

With regard to requests for independent commissions and reviews, Democrats have written to both Attorneys General Ashcroft and Gonzales on May 20, 2004 and May 12, 2005, respectively, asking for the appointment of a special counsel to investigate whether there had been violations of the War Crimes Act or the Anti-Torture Act.<sup>970</sup> The DOJ denied both requests with little in the way of explanation. It was not until July 11, 2005, over a year after the original letter, that the Department of Justice responded to the Ashcroft request.<sup>971</sup>

In addition, Democrats asked for the creation of an independent commission. On November 4, 2005, Senator Levin and others introduced an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would have established a national commission on policies and practices on the treatment of detainees since September 11, 2001.<sup>972</sup> The amendment was defeated on the Senate floor by a vote of 43-55.<sup>973</sup> In the House, Representative Waxman, Democratic Leader Pelosi, and other senior Democrats twice introduced similar legislation to establish an independent commission. The first resolution, H. Res. 690,<sup>974</sup> was introduced in June 2004, and the second, H.R. 3003,<sup>975</sup> was introduced in June 2005. Neither of these pieces of legislation ever received a hearing or a vote on the House floor.

Democrats have also attempted to obtain information by introducing Resolutions of Inquiry. In June 2004, Congressman Conyers and 47 other Members of Congress introduced resolutions to gather information regarding the treatment of prisoners or detainees in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Guantanamo Bay. The resolutions were referred to the Judiciary Committee, the International Relations Committee, and the Armed Services Committee.<sup>976</sup> The resolutions were designed to trace the evolution of documents arguing that tortuous treatment of prisoners is not barred by American or international law, and to attempt to discover who commissioned these documents and whether the blank check given to the Administration under their rationale was ever used.<sup>977</sup> The Resolutions were all voted down on party line votes in all Committees.<sup>978</sup>

Other Democratic members have also tried to use Resolutions of Inquiry to obtain information on torture. For example, on May 12, 2004, Congressman Bell introduced H. Res. 640, which requested the Secretary of Defense to provide "any picture, photograph, video, communication, or report produced in conjunction with any completed Department of Defense investigation conducted by Major General Antonio M. Taguba relating to allegations of torture or allegations of violations of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq or any completed Department of Defense investigation relating to the abuse or alleged abuse of a prisoner of war or detainee by any civilian contractor working in Iraq who is employed on behalf of the Department of Defense."<sup>979</sup> The Resolution was referred to the Committee on Armed Services and was voted down.<sup>980</sup>

Democratic efforts have been particularly important given the fact that the Bush Administration's purported investigations into the allegations of torture have been largely non-responsive. While there have been a number of investigations into the treatment of Iraqi prisoners, each one has been limited to distinct areas of the military chain of command, which has prevented any inquiry into the accountability of anyone in the administration.<sup>981</sup> Nor were they tasked with investigating how ideas and direction for abuse moved amongst different units, and between entire theaters of combat. The Administration maintains these are all "isolated" events. Indeed, by setting up a dozen discrete investigations that ignore any connections between behavior, the abuse, at first blush, will of course continue to look like isolated events.<sup>982</sup>

#### d. Post-War Cover-Ups and Retribution and More Deceptions

The Administration has also retaliated against and publicly smeared those who have dared to speak out against the war in Iraq, including Joe Wilson and his wife, covert CIA agent Valerie Plame. When Democrats have attempted to gain insight and demand accountability, by writing letters, requesting hearings in Congress, and seeking adoption of Resolutions of Inquiry, the Administration and congressional Republicans have rejected or ignored nearly every request.

Congressional Democrats have written numerous letters to the Administration regarding the Plame leak that remains unanswered. Soon after Valerie Plame was exposed to the public as a covert CIA operative, Democrats sought President Bush's assurance that White House officials would cooperate with any investigation and would address reports that certain officials were refusing to cooperate.<sup>983</sup> In addition, when it became clear that Karl Rove may have been involved in the leak of Plame's name, Congressman Conyers wrote a letter to Mr. Rove asking him to resign.<sup>984</sup> Later, a similar letter was sent to President Bush asking him to require Mr. Rove to explain his role in the leak or resign.<sup>985</sup> To date, Rove has not been asked or required to explain his role, and there has been no discussion of his resignation.<sup>986</sup>

After Scooter Libby was indicted on October 26, 2005 for perjury and obstruction of justice for his role in the leak, Representatives Conyers, Waxman and Hinchey wrote to Vice President Cheney and requested that he "make [himself] available to appear before Congress to explain the details and reasons for [his] office's involvement – and [Cheney's] personal involvement – in the disclosure of Valerie Wilson's identity as a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operative."<sup>987</sup> To date, Vice President Cheney has failed to respond.

Congressman Conyers also asked President Bush to pledge not to pardon anyone involved in the Plame leak because of a concern that the Administration's "low ethical standards foreshadow future actions on [the Administration's] part that will allow individuals responsible for this breach of national security to evade accountability."<sup>988</sup> Furthermore, senior Senate Democrats, including Senators Reid, Durbin, Stabenow and Schumer, asked President Bush to pledge not to pardon anyone convicted in

connection with the leak investigation.<sup>989</sup> The President has not responded to either of these requests.

Democrats have also written letters to the Administration in an attempt to obtain information about others who have suffered similar retaliation efforts by the Administration. For example, on August 29, 2005, Representative Waxman sent a letter to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld requesting that the Department of Defense investigate the removal of Bunnatine Greenhouse from her position as Principal Assistant for Contracting for the Army Corps of Engineers. Representative Waxman wrote that "[t]he decision to remove Ms. Greenhouse from her position and demote her appears to be retaliation for her June 27, 2005 testimony before Congress."<sup>990</sup> Mr. Waxman received a response to this letter on September 27, 2005; however, the letter is unpersuasive because it asserts that there was a sufficient record to determine whether Greenhouse was properly removed because General Strock's staff put together a memo. Of course, Greenhouse's allegations specifically involved Gen. Strock and his people.<sup>991</sup>

In addition, in a letter dated January 14, 2004, Mr. Waxman asked Condoleezza Rice to explain "inconsistencies in how the Administration handles allegations regarding the release of sensitive information."<sup>992</sup> Specifically, Mr. Waxman highlighted the immediate response and retaliation against Paul O'Neill's television interview (where he voiced criticism of the Administration) and contrasted it with the Administration's delayed handling of the Plame Leak.<sup>993</sup> Mr. Waxman also noted the very different treatment given to Mr. O'Neill and Bob Woodward, whose book, "Bush at War," cites notes taken during more than 50 meetings of the National Security Council and both classified and unclassified written materials. Ms. Rice never responded to this letter.

Finally, Representative Conyers wrote a letter to the President expressing concerns that the Department of Defense is "under-reporting casualties in Iraq by only reporting non-fatal casualties incurred in combat."<sup>994</sup> In the letter, Congressman Conyers asks the President to provide a full accounting of the American casualties in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion.<sup>995</sup> To date, Mr. Conyers has not received a response to the letter.

Just as Administration officials ignored and evaded Democratic efforts to reveal the truth, Congressional Republicans have similarly blocked Democratic requests for investigative hearings. On October 30, 2003, House Judiciary Committee Democrats wrote to Chairman Sensenbrenner asking him to hold hearings to investigate the Plame leak.<sup>996</sup> After it became apparent that Karl Rove was almost certainly involved in the leak in some capacity, Committee Democrats asked to hold hearings a second time in a letter dated July 14, 2005.<sup>997</sup> Democrats never received responses to these requests. Representative Waxman also pursued committee hearings, requesting investigative oversight in a letter to House Government Reform Chairman Davis on September 29, 2003.<sup>998</sup> Mr. Waxman tried again on October 8, 2003,<sup>999</sup> December 11, 2003,<sup>1000</sup> and then again July 11, 2005,<sup>1001</sup> in light of mounting evidence of Rove's

involvement in the Plame outing. On October 28, 2005<sup>1002</sup> and November 16, 2005,<sup>1003</sup> Mr. Waxman made his fifth and sixth requests for the Government Reform Committee to hold hearings on the Plame leak. To date, Chairman Davis has either denied or ignored all of these requests.

In addition to oversight into the Plame leak, Democrats have also attempted to gain information about and hold the Administration accountable for activities occurring in Iraq. First, in May 2004, Representative Waxman and other Members of Congress asked Chairman Davis to investigate allegations that civilian contractors participated in the abuse of detainees at Abu Ghraib.<sup>1004</sup> Chairman Davis did not respond to this letter. Second, Mr. Waxman tried to enlist Chairman Davis in seeking documents from the Pentagon about reports that the U.S. military is secretly paying Iraqi newspapers to run stories presenting a positive image of the United States in Iraq.<sup>1005</sup> Again, Chairman Davis has not responded to this request to date.

Democrats also pursued Resolutions of Inquiry. On July 29, 2005, Congressman Holt, along with other Members of Congress, attempted to request the Administration to provide information about the identity of the source of the Plame leak.<sup>1006</sup> The Resolutions were referred to four Committees, including the Judiciary Committee, the International Relations Committee, the Armed Services Committee and the Intelligence Committee.

The Republicans voted all of the Resolutions down, arguing that there was an ongoing criminal investigation into the matter and the resolutions competed with that investigation.<sup>1007</sup> This argument would seem to be disingenuous given that there are numerous precedents for congressional committees investigating concurrently with the Justice Department and with other matters under criminal review by the Executive Branch<sup>1008</sup> –most notably many concurrent investigations by the Republican Congress involving the Clinton Administration.